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A TOUR AROUND NEW YORK AND MY SUMMER ACRE

BEING

THE RECREATIONS OF

Mr. Felix Oldboy

BY

JOHN FLAVEL MINES, LL.D.

"Nothing is so really new as that which is old"

ILLUSTRATED

22332 X

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE
1893

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MY DEAR SON

MASTER FELIX OLDBOY, Jr.

WHO HAS BEEN THE PLEASANT COMPANION OF THESE ROADSIDE
RAMBLES AND DAYS OF SUNSHINE, AND TO WHOM I COMMIT
THE PLEASANT TASK OF WRITING UP FORTY YEARS
HENCE THE SCENES HIS EYES HAVE WITNESSED
IN OUR WALKS THROUGH THE CITY WHICH
WE BOTH HAVE LEARNED TO LOVE

THIS VOLUME

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PREFATORY NOTE

The sketches gathered in this volume were written by the late Colonel John F. Mines for newspaper publication, and appeared, first, the "Tour," in the New York *Evening Post*, and afterwards the "Summer Acre," in the New York *Commercial Advertiser*. From their beginning they had singular good-fortune in engaging public attention and exciting interest, and many requests for preservation of them in permanent form were received by their author and his editors. After the death of Colonel Mines the sketches were found among papers in possession of his family, and are here presented in the order of arrangement which he had indicated. The text remains after revision substantially as it was written; a few passages have been transferred to new relations for the sake of congruity, a few have been reduced to foot-notes; duplications have been avoided, and some allusions to mere news of the day have been removed. The passage on Governor Morgan Lewis, in Chapter XX., is taken, by kind permission of the Rev. Dr. Dix, from a paper by Colonel Mines in a late number of the *Trinity Record*. Editorial notes are marked by the letter "L." The work has been enriched by many pictures of scenes referred to by the author, and further illustrations not directly called for by his text have been introduced, that the volume may be made

more complete pictorially; all of them, it is believed, will be welcome to New Yorkers who find pleasure and pride in the history of their city. The reader of these ingenious and instructive papers may find it useful to identify the time of their production as in the years 1886–90 inclusive.

JAMES E. LEARNED.

NEW YORK,
September, 1892.

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A TOUR AROUND NEW YORK

CHAPTER I

SUGGESTIONS FROM AN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION—NEW YORK NEAR HALF A CENTURY AGO—A REMINISCENCE OF THE DAYS WHEN TRINITY CHURCH WAS NEW—PREACHERS AND LAYMEN OF A PAST GENERATION

I AM not a very old boy, but already the events of years gone begin to stand out with a vividness which does not belong to these later days, and I find myself more than eager to recall them.

In passing Trinity Church on a soft June morning of 1886, I found the services of Ascension Day in progress, and this brought back the recollection of the part I had taken in the consecration services that were held there forty years ago that day. I was then one of the foundation scholars of Trinity School. This amply endowed academy held its sessions in a large building on Varick Street, near Canal, and numbered 150 pupils. Its rector was the Rev. William Morris, LL.D., a stalwart graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and a rigid disciplinarian. Solomon's rod in his hands meant something. On that eventful day he marshalled his pupils in the school, and then, placing himself at the

head in Oxford cap and resplendent silk gown, marched them down Broadway to the Globe Hotel, where the procession was formed.

The boys led the van in the stately march to the church. Then followed theological students, vestrymen, and a long line of clergymen, ending with the Bishop of the diocese, Dr. Benjamin T. Onderdonk. At the chancel rail we stopped, opened ranks, and the rest of the procession passed up the broad centre aisle between our lines, reciting the grand psalm of consecration, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates!" Of the long service that followed I remember only the reading of the first lesson by Dr. Morris—the consecration prayer of Solomon's Temple—and at this lapse of time I can still hear his sonorous voice repeating its magnificent petitions. Dr. Hodges presided at the organ, and he had prepared for the occasion an apparently interminable "Te Deum," which I had the pleasure of learning when I became a member of the choir.

The consecration of Trinity Church was a great event in New York, and gave rise to no end of discussion. It had been darkly whispered in private circles that some of the parish clergy intended to "turn their backs upon the people," as they all do now, and the public were ready to protest against the innovation. Up to that time the chancel arrangements that existed in St. John's Chapel, where I usually attended church, had been the prevailing ecclesiastical fashion. A circular chancel rail surrounded a wooden structure composed of a reading-desk below and pulpit above, and with a little square white wooden altar in front of the desk in which prayers were read. Into this desk each

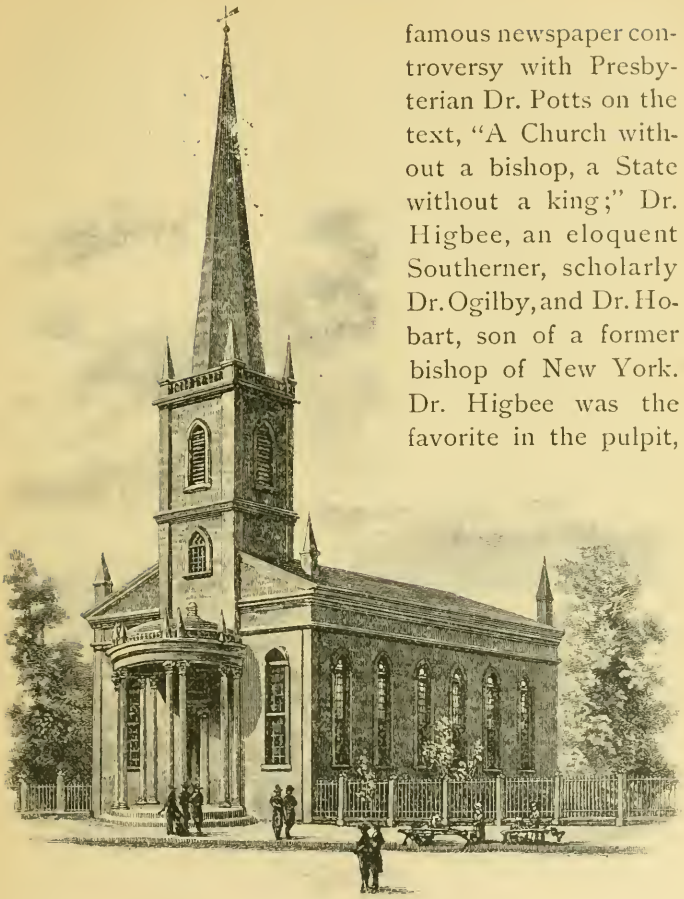
TRINITY CHURCH

afternoon two clergymen, one arrayed in a surplice and the other in a black silk gown, would shut themselves, carefully closing the door, apparently from the fear that one of them might fall asleep and tumble out. At the proper time the black-robed minister would go out and reappear in the pulpit, while his companion apparently enjoyed a nap. But in the

new Trinity Church only the altar was to stand within the railing. The pulpit was to be outside and opposite to the prayer-desk. This was a change, indeed. But when it was understood that a brazen eagle was to support the Bible from which the lessons of the day were to be read, criticism took up the cudgels and went to work. Bishops and sectarian preachers, laymen and professors, sought the columns of the newspapers to vent their opinions, and the liveliest kind of a controversy was waged for a while. It ended in a laugh, when a bogus letter from Bishop Chase of Illinois was published, in which he was made to say that he knew nothing of the merits of that particular eagle, but if they would fill his pockets with good golden American eagles for the benefit of Jubilee College, he would be content to drop all controversy.

As the son of a clergyman it was my good-fortune to know all the eminent clergymen of that day—at least, to know them as an observant boy does. Our family were ardent supporters of Bishop Onderdonk through all his troubles: he had a patriarchal way with us children which seemed to leave a benediction behind him. Dr. Berrian, rector of Trinity Parish, was personally all kindness, but I thought him the poorest preacher I was compelled to hear. It was said of the good old man that when a country clergyman, half starved on a salary of $500, came to him and asked his influence to get him another charge, he remarked, "I do not see why you young clergymen want to change so often. Why, I have been in Trinity Church forty years, and never have thought of leaving." A poor preacher, he was a fine executive officer. His assistants were courtly Dr. Wainwright, who had the

famous newspaper controversy with Presbyterian Dr. Potts on the text, "A Church without a bishop, a State without a king;" Dr. Higbee, an eloquent Southerner, scholarly Dr. Ogilby, and Dr. Hobart, son of a former bishop of New York. Dr. Higbee was the favorite in the pulpit,



TRINITY CHURCH
[The second edifice, erected in 1788]

and divided his preaching laurels with Dr. Tyng, who had recently come to old St. George's, in Beekman Street, to succeed Dr. Milnor, and Dr. Whitehouse of St. Thomas, afterwards called to be Bishop of Illinois.

These clergymen were all present at the consecration of Trinity Church; and there were many other famous divines there also, including Dr. Thomas House Taylor, rector of the new Grace Church, at the head of Broadway; Dr. Lyell, rector of Christ Church, in Anthony (now Worth) Street; Dr. Haight, the able theologian who presided over All Saints', in Henry Street, and who subsequently declined the mitre of Massachusetts; Dr. Creighton, of Tarrytown, who might have succeeded Bishop Onderdonk, had he so desired; Drs. Potter, Vinton, Cutler, Duffie, etc. Chief among the bishops who were present was Bishop Doane, of New Jersey, who looked every inch the prelate in his robes, and who, in my judgment, was the finest orator in the Church.

Speaking of pulpit orators recalls an anecdote which I caught as a boy from the lips of confidential clerical critics. At one time Drs. Onderdonk, Wainwright, and Schroeder were the three chief preachers in Trinity Parish, and a witty layman undertook to give the style of the dogmatic Onderdonk, flowery Schroeder, and courtly Wainwright, as exemplified in brief sermons on the text "Two beans and two beans make four beans," somewhat as follows: Dr. Onderdonk *loquitur:* "The Church in her wisdom has decreed that if two beans be added unto two beans, the product shall be four beans; and if any self-sufficient mortal shall presume to question this conclusion of the law and the prophets, together with the canons, let him be anathema." Dr. Schroeder, after enunciating his text, was supposed to wake at sunrise, wander into the dewy fields, and pluck one pearly bean after another, and finally go into ecstasies over the quartet of

shining beauties which he held in his hand. But the point of the satire was reached in Dr. Wainwright's case, who was made to say: "It has generally been conceded, and nowhere that I know of denied, that if two beans be added unto two beans, their product shall be four beans. But if there be in this intelligent and enlightened audience any who may venture to have conscientious doubts upon the subject, far be it from me, my brethren, to interfere with such a person's honest convictions."

Dr. Wainwright was a cold, didactic preacher in his parish pulpit, but when elected bishop he astonished everybody by warming up into an earnest evangelist, and he died universally regretted. Bishop Onderdonk passed away under a cloud which had hung over him for many years, and whose gloom was never dissipated. At one time Dr. Schroeder was the favorite preacher of the city, and it was said of him that if you wanted to know where Schroeder preached on a Sunday, you had only to follow the crowd. But his fame was evanescent, and when he resigned in a pet he was astonished to find that his resignation was accepted by the vestry of Trinity, and was still more astonished to find himself a failure when he attempted to set up a church of his own. The building he reared faces Lafayette Place on Eighth Street; afterwards it was for some time occupied by St. Ann's (Roman Catholic) congregation, and has recently proved a failure as a theatre.

Forty years ago the vestrymen of Trinity Parish were a famous race of men. Philip Hone, the most courtly Mayor that New York ever had, was one of them. Major-general Dix, Cyrus Curtiss, John J.

Cisco, Major Jonathan Lawrence, of the Revolutionary Army, and other men of note were of the number. Our seat in St. John's Chapel was two pews behind General Dix, and I used to see the present rector of Trinity Parish there — a slender, spectacled youth of severely studious aspect, whom I never remember to have seen smiling except when a strange minister in the reading-desk fell sound asleep and failed to be awakened by the retiring congregation. The families of Gen. Alexander Hamilton and Gen. Philip Schuyler were also attendants, as well as those of Dr. Hunter, General Morton, Philip Lydig, Dr. Green, Robert Hyslop, Oscar Smedberg, Lewis Delafield, and Elias G. Drake. They have beautified the chancel end of St. John's Chapel since those days, but they have not improved much on the contents of the pews.

The ecclesiastical chronicle of Trinity Church in 1846 would be incomplete without mention of David Lyon, the stalwart sexton, whose robust presence was a standing terror to the small but mischievous boys of the choir. David was an institution. Proud of the church building committed to his care, he grudged the hours he was compelled to spend away from it. His management of the consecration procession was a miracle of unostentatious energy. The clergy always treated him as a friend, and he deserved their confidence. In after-years I gratified a laudable ambition by bestowing half a dollar on David for permitting me with a friend to mount up the steeple.

The New York of forty years ago was a different community from what it is now. When Dr. James Milnor, rector of St. George's, in Beekman Street, died,

the city newspapers turned their column rules and went into mourning. The dead preacher had resigned his seat in Congress to enter the ministry. The *Courier and Enquirer* published the controversial letters between Dr. Potts and Dr. Wainwright, and made a great sensation out of it. The reason for this neighborly state of affairs was that the city had then developed only the rudiments of its present glory. People of wealth still clustered about the Battery and Bowling Green, or built solid up-town homes of brick on Bond, Bleecker, and Great Jones streets, or facing Washington Square. The rector of Trinity kept open house with his wife and three handsome daughters at No. 50 Varick Street, opposite St. John's Park, which was then the most aristocratic quarter of the city. Dr. Wainwright lived in Hubert Street and Dr. Higbee in Chambers Street. The residence of Bishop Onderdonk was in Franklin Street, between Church Street and West Broadway. Trinity, St. Paul's, and St. John's had large and fashionable congregations, who lived within walking distance of the churches, and the Battery had a highly select circle of frequenters, and was the starting-point of many a love-match among Knickerbocker circles. Fourteenth Street was far up-town. The site of the Fifth Avenue Hotel was vacant lots roughly fenced in with boards. Stages crept along leisurely every hour to the pleasant rural hamlets of Yorkville, Harlem, Bloomingdale, and Manhattanville; and, strange as it may seem, honesty was so much the rule that people who rode in Kipp and Brown's stages were allowed to pay their fare at the end of the ride, instead of being compelled to stand and deliver at the start.

CHAPTER II

AN OBLITERATED PARK — SOME OLD CHURCHES—DEPARTED GLORIES OF VARICK AND LAIGHT STREETS — MR. GREENOUGH'S SCHOOL — RILEY'S MUSEUM HOTEL — THE "TROOP A" OF THE "FORTIES"

AT the time when the present century was born a wide sandy beach extended from the foot of Duane Street to the mouth of the estuary by which the brook that ran from the Collect Pond, at the present site of the Tombs, through Canal Street, issued to the Hudson River. The adjacent land, sandy for the most part and barren, was laid out in streets and dotted here and there with the comfortable homes of solid burghers. The infant city had just recovered from the untoward effects of its long occupation by the British troops and the removal of the seat of Government, and, mindful of this progress, Trinity Church began, about ninety years ago, the erection of the handsome and commodious church known as St. John's Chapel, located on Varick Street—so named after one of the early Mayors, who was also an officer in the Revolutionary Army. The chapel was so large and situated so far up-town that the neighbors all wondered when the time would come that a congregation would be found to fill its pews.

In front of the chapel a wide beach of sand, unshaded by a tree, stretched down to the river. In order to attract settlers to the neighborhood, the vestry of Trinity Parish, to which most of the adjacent land be-

longed, determined to lay out a large square directly in front of the chapel as a private park, for the benefit of those who should build homes fronting upon it. Trees were planted, broad gravelled walks laid out, flower-beds and vases of shrubbery set at intervals, a greensward was cultivated, and the wilderness was made to blossom as the rose. Thus was St. John's Park born. It was a thing of beauty in its day. "Old Cisco," who had been a slave in the family of that name, was made its keeper, and warned to keep a sharp eye upon the boys of the period. The park became a paradise for birds; robins and wrens and bluebirds abounded, and the Baltimore oriole hung its nest on the branches of the sycamores.

The loveliness of St. John's Park soon attracted many of the best citizens of the young metropolis to its vicinity. They reared substantial houses of brick, plain on the outside, but luxuriously furnished within, and in the gardens they built cisterns and sank wells. The city had no water-works, but at every convenient corner they dug and found water, and erected wooden pumps. There was wealth enough on the square to pay for all these improvements, and most of the names of the householders had been known in colonial days. The families of Alexander Hamilton, General Schuyler, and General Morton were among them, as were also the Aymars, Drakes, Lydigs, Coits, Lords, Delafields. Randolphs, and Hunters. They owned their houses, and had their own keys to the massive gates of the park, from which all outsiders were rigorously excluded. The neighborhood formed an exclusive coterie, into which parvenu wealth could find no passport of admission.

There was no trouble now to gather a congregation that filled St. John's Chapel. Indeed, there arose a demand for other churches in the neighborhood. The Presbyterians erected a house of worship on Laight Street, at the corner of Varick, facing the park, and here for for a number of years the Rev. Dr. Samuel H. Cox ministered. He was the inveterate foe of slavery, and when the abolition troubles began and developed into riots that threatened life and property, the congregation took alarm, Dr. Cox resigned his charge, and they called as their pastor the Rev. Flavel S. Mines, a Virginian, who a few years subsequently became an Episcopal clergyman, and was followed into the church by so many of his congregation as practically to end its existence. Both of Dr. Cox's sons became Episcopal clergymen also, and one of them is now Bishop of Buffalo. Roe Lockwood, the publisher, Henry A. Coit, Daniel Lord, and Mr. Aymar, the great shipping merchant, were elders and pillars of the flock; but the one of all others whom the children loved most was "Grandma" Bethune, mother of the distinguished divine of that name. In the closing years of her life she used to gather a class of forty or fifty children at her home every Sunday, and we were all eager to go and sit at the feet of the dear old lady.

The late Charles F. Briggs, well known in journalism years ago, and the "Harry Franco" of the past generation of novelists, used to attend Laight Street Church very often, and in the congregation were a bevy of his pretty cousins, daughters of a famous ship-owner of that day—one of the Marshalls. It was long before the dawn of æsthetic taste; art was looked upon in

ST. JOHN'S CHAPEL AND PARK

solid commercial circles as the luxury of idle hours, and the profession of artist as a mere excuse for laziness. No merchant would have dreamed of allowing his daughter to marry "a painter." Yet a young artist had dared to avow his love to the prettiest of the above-named bevy of young girls, and she had boldly ventured to say that she loved him in return and intended to marry him. Society was shocked. It mattered not that the young man had talent (and, indeed, eventually he made a name for himself that all delighted to honor); society drew the line at artists, and did not recognize them as eligible. One day, as Mr. Briggs entered the house, the entire chorus of its women threw themselves upon him and begged him to remonstrate with Emily and save the family honor. "The family honor," said Briggs, with the gruffness he assumed on such occasions, and that was only relieved by a telltale twinkle of the eye; "what has Emily been doing now?" "Doing!" shrieked the chorus, "she's going to disgrace us all by marrying an artist." "Pooh!" came the quick reply, "he isn't enough of an artist to make it anything of a disgrace." The women folk were indignant at his apparent indifference, but when the sibylline utterance of Briggs was carried to the father, he was so amused by it that he withdrew his opposition to the marriage.

THE FRENCH CHURCH IN PINE STREET

Other churches were scattered about in the vicinity of the park. There were Methodist houses of worship in Duane and Vestry Streets; a Dutch Reformed

church in Franklin Street; a Presbyterian church in Canal Street, and the portly white marble edifice of the old Huguenot Congregation that had emigrated from Pine Street to the corner of Church and Franklin, and had united its destinies with the Episcopalians. These churches have either disappeared or have followed the exodus of the church-going population uptown. They were practically put *hors de combat* when St. John's Park was obliterated from the city map. It was a cruel act. In my eyes it seemed an outrage wholly unjustifiable. The only public execution I ever witnessed was the slaying of those great trees under which my sisters and I had played, and I would as soon have seen so many men beheaded. A fatal fascination drew me to the spot. I did not want to go, but could not help going out of my way to pass it by. The axes were busy with the hearts of the giants I had loved, and the iron-handed carts went crashing over the flower-beds, leaving a trail of death. The trees lay prone over the ploughed gravel-walks, and a few little birds were screaming over their tops, bewailing the destruction of their nests. It was horrible. As I looked upon the scene I knew how people must feel when an army passed over their homes, leaving desolation in its wake. It boots not to ask who was at fault for blotting out this oasis. There are some who do not want to know, because they do not want to withhold forgiveness from the barbarians. If the pretty little garden, fragrant with so many memories of old loves and domestic joys, had given place to a block of homes, it would not have been so bad; but to rear in its place a coarse pile of bricks for use as a freight depot, to make it a centre of ceaseless noise

and riot, was to create in an earthly paradise the abomination of desolation.

Many years ago, previous to the outbreak of the war with Mexico, Jeremiah J. Greenough had a small select school at 82 Franklin Street, and when a very small boy I attended it. Among the pupils were Col. H. S. Olcott, the American apostle of Buddhism; George De Forest Lord, Bowie Dash, and Dr. George Suckley, who was chief surgeon of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler's army corps. Mr. Greenough wielded the ruler and rattan with considerable force and persistency, but he was more than rivalled by Dr. Morris, of Trinity School, and Mr. William Forrest, who had a large academy for boys on Franklin Street, west of Church. It was always a point of dispute between the pupils of these latter institutions as to whether "Billy" Forrest or "old Morris" could whip the most boys in a day. There are those who still lament the disappearance of the good old race of school-masters. Who knew them in the flesh fail to join in the lamentation.

On our way to and from Mr. Greenough's modest temple of literature we used to pass a structure that had far more interest for us than the halls of Congress, or of the Montezumas either. It occupied the west corner of West Broadway and Franklin Street, and was widely known to fame as Riley's Fifth Ward Museum Hotel. Its interior was the prototype of the modern bric-à-brac "saloon," with its paintings from the Paris Salon, except that there was nothing on the walls or in the glass cases which stood on all sides of the main room, which was reached by an ample flight of stairs and were always open to inspection, that a child might not look at and inquire about. That was

a wonderful room indeed. It held original portraits of great statesmen and warriors, and displayed their swords and portions of their uniforms. Among its

RILEY'S FIFTH WARD HOTEL

curiosities were a two-headed calf eloquently stuffed, the pig that butted a man off the bridge, one of the Hawaiian clubs that dashed out the brains of Captain Cook, Tecumseh's rifle, a pipe that General Jackson had smoked, and a large number of genuine relics of

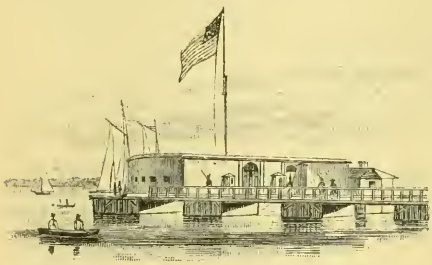
the colonial days of New York. Riley was a connoisseur in relics, and had good reason to congratulate himself on his collection. He liked to have appreciative visitors, and his hotel was a model of respectability.

STATUE OF THE EARL OF CHATHAM

Outside of the basement door on Franklin Street, surrounded by a little iron railing through which some grasses struggled feebly for existence, stood a relic of the past which I could never bear to pass without reading the inscription on it once again. It had once been a marble statue of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, placed by the grateful people of New York on the steps of the Royal Exchange ten years before the war for independence broke out, and dashed down and mutilated by the British soldiery in revenge for the destruction of the statue of King George on the Bowling Green. The head and one arm of the statue were broken off at the time, and the torso was wheeled away to the corporation yard, where it lay for a quarter of a century among the rubbish, until Mr. Riley disentombed it. After his death the Historical Society got hold of the statue, and retain it in their collection. It was an unfortunate coincidence for the Earl of Chatham that he incurred the enmity of the British soldiers in New York in 1776 and of the New York Aldermen of 1886. The latter signalized their displeasure by exchanging the name Chatham Street, which had an historical

and patriotic meaning, for Park Row, which is a misnomer in its application to a street lying entirely beyond the City Hall Park. But in these busy days of railroad franchises, it is too much to expect that an alderman would devote any of his time to the study of history.

In the early part of the century a round brick fort, fashioned after the style of Fort Lafayette, was erected at the foot of Hubert Street, out in the river, and it stood there during the war of 1812 and for some years afterwards as an alleged tower of defence against foreign foes. No enemy's foot, however, has pressed the banks of the Hudson for a century, and this fort and a similar one that once stood at the foot of Gansevoort Street gave way before the rapid march of commerce. The latter was a desolate ruin forty years ago, and the school-boys of the Fifth Ward used to make Saturday pilgrimages there and play famous games of the period among its ruins. "How many miles to Babylon?" was the last cry heard there before its walls were torn down and carted away.



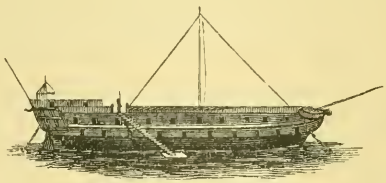
FORT FOOT OF HUBERT STREET

But there was another demonstration in the way of war which the boys always delighted to witness, of which St. John's Park was a favorite centre. On training days the citizen soldiery made their appear-

ance in their Sunday clothes, clustering gloomily around the official who drilled them with a small bamboo cane, and swore furiously when they marched, as they usually did, all out of shape. They were an untiring source of amusement to the street urchins, who guyed them unmercifully. But the militia—of whom, as quaint John Phœnix remarked, it might be truly said that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these—excited unbounded and genuine admiration, whether attired in the uniform of Austria, France, or Italy. The Highlanders, whom old Captain Manson, a hero of the late war, commanded, generally carried most of the boys in their train. The plaids and plumes took the eye, and the great shaggy hats carried an impression of terror with them that made every man look every inch a soldier. Yet of all the militiamen of that time, "Dandy" Marx's hussars most pleased my boyish eye. Young Marx—Henry Carroll—was the Beau Brummel of his generation, and his sisters set the fashions to the ladies. They were an impressive sight as they walked down Broadway from their up-town house on that thoroughfare, near Prince Street, in the afternoons—the handsome and elegantly attired sisters leading their greyhounds by a blue ribbon, and escorted by their equally handsome brother in a costume that was always faultless. The sisters were devoted to their brother, and none of the three ever married. Harry died years ago, and was buried in Greenwood. The sisters lived many years, and became religious devotees in their old age, bequeathing their money in each case to a clergyman—and a lawsuit. When the brother started his company of hussars all the gilded youth of the city were eager to be

enrolled, and an enormous amount of wealth was covered by their brilliant jackets. They were a dashing squad, but grew tired of the sport after a while and disbanded. "Troop A" will find it difficult to outshine "Dandy" Marx's men.

At the foot of Canal Street a little brook from the Lispenard meadows joined the larger tributary from the Collect Pond. A short distance above, at the foot of Houston Street, once stretched a great swamp, through which the Minetta brook (which has given its name to a street, a "lane," and a "place") made a tiny thread of silver. The Minetta was a famous stream for trout. The fishermen angling patiently for impossible bass at the ends of our wharves would hardly believe the fact, but it is perfectly credible. The brooks and ponds of the Island of Manhattan were always famous for their fish.



THE JERSEY PRISON SHIP

CHAPTER III

COLUMBIA COLLEGE AS IT WAS — A COMMENCEMENT FORTY YEARS AGO — RIOTS THAT COST LIFE — LANDMARKS OF CHELSEA — AN ECCLESIASTICAL ROMANCE

PAUSING for a moment under the trees of the old Theological Seminary, in ancient Chelsea village, and marking the march of improvement in the construction of the great "quad," with its noble Chapel of the Good Shepherd, I am reminded that there is one green spot back in my path to which I have not yet paid my respects. From the door of the old Cushman homestead, opposite the east end of the Seminary grounds, comes one of my old school-mates of that name. A freak of memory recalls him instantaneously in silken gown, in the old chapel of Columbia College. He was slender then and rosy; now he is more or less gray and robust. His student gown would be a miserable misfit to-day.

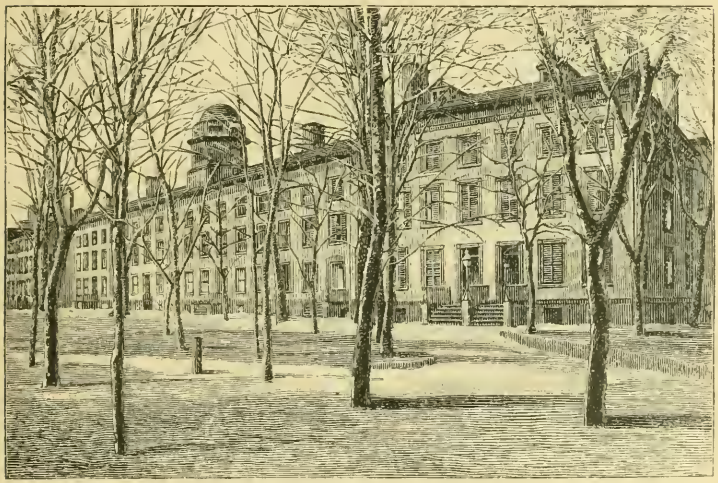
THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In the old programmes of public processions the Faculty and students of Columbia College were always awarded a place of honor. Omnibuses were assigned for their conveyance, and they were expected to embark in these vehicles in their silken robes. As a very small boy, I used to stand on the sidewalk and look upon these superior beings with envy, wondering if I ever should arrive at the dignity of being exalted to an official omnibus. At this distance of time I have a stray suspicion that the students who rode in the processions were chiefly Freshmen. Later, it was my delight to attend the commencements and semi-annuals, and the speakers had always a deeply interested audience of one at least.

Columbia College occupied an unbroken block between Barclay and Murray streets and Church Street and College Place. Park Place went only to Church Street, and the street from College Place to the river was called Robinson Street. The buildings were not imposing, but there was a scholastic air about the quadrangle which did not fail to inspire awe. Two Revolutionary cannon partly sunk in the ground guarded the gate-way; there was a legend to the effect that they had been captured from the British by Alexander Hamilton, once a student of the college—King's College, as it was in his day. It had been my ambition to be graduated at this institution, but fate sent me to an Eastern college. However, I kept up my acquaintance with "the boys," and visited them on all possible occasions. Here it was that my first silk hat met an untimely fate. I had just purchased it, and with its added dignity entered the side gate impressively, when a well-directed kick from the stout

boot of stout Cutler C. McAllister sent a foot-ball high in air and it came down with a crash directly upon my new tile. A second visit to the hatter was imperative, and I tried to smile, but I never admired the game of foot-ball afterwards.

In those days President King was the academical



COLUMBIA COLLEGE IN 1850

head of Columbia, but Professor Anthon, "Old Bull" Anthon, as the students irreverently designated him, was a bigger man than all the rest of the Faculty combined. It used to be said of him that he ate a boy for breakfast every morning, so severe was his discipline in the grammar-school over which he also presided. In the college class-room his powers of sarcasm made him the terror of the careless or lazy student. His assistant, Mr. Drisler, had then won no

special laurels. Venerable Professor McVickar was a favorite with everybody, a gentle, kindly man, whose erudition was proverbial, and of whose kindliness the students were prone to take advantage, even though it were with pangs of penitence. As a boy I had met him often, and been drawn towards him, but the other members of the Faculty inspired me with unspeakable awe.

I remember attending a commencement of Columbia College that was held in the Episcopal Church of the Crucifixion on Eighth Street, between Broadway and Fourth Avenue. It was soon after the Mexican War had closed that I attended the commencement at this church, and General Scott, tall and soldierly, was a conspicuous figure on the platform. One of the speakers, a son of Dr. Schroeder, rector of the church, turned and addressed the general, who bowed in a dignified manner to the plaudits of the audience. But the speaker who most challenged my admiration that day was "Billy" Armitage, whose popularity with his classmates seemed to be unbounded. He was subsequently Bishop of Wisconsin, and died in 1873, before he had reached the prime of life.

The men of that epoch were my seniors. A few years only intervened between us, but they made a great gulf in those days. Later I knew all the boys. Among these were John H. Anthon, afterwards the eloquent leader of the Apollo Hall Democracy, "Jack" Byron, Cutler C. McAllister, Dr. Thurston, Samuel F. Barger, the railway financier, Col. H. S. Olcott, Gen. Stewart L. Woodford, since Lieutenant-governor and Congressman; Bob Chisholm, afterwards a Confederate officer; a delegation from the neighborhood of

St. John's Park, consisting of the Smedbergs, Hamiltons, Lydigs, Hyslops, and Drakes; George C. Pennell, who lived in Chambers Street, and was popularly reputed to have weighed two hundred pounds when he was born (he had a voice to match, and when he spoke his great piece "Sampson" he almost literally brought down the house); a lot of quiet students who afterwards became parsons, J. S. B. Hodges, Brewer, Dickinson, etc. Why lengthen out the roster? There is another set of college buildings now, with new brands of professors, and a thousand catalogued students. We, who remember old Columbia College in the days when a literary atmosphere still lingered about Park Place, and a stray milliner employed a half-dozen pretty apprentices in her fashionable establishment on that thoroughfare, are gray-headed and have nearly finished our story. *Morituri vos salutamus!*

The University of New York still keeps its location on Washington Square. Its walls recall one of the early riots of the city, caused by an uprising of working-men against the use of stone cut by State Prison convicts in the construction of the building. The military were called out, but there was no bloodshed. In my undergraduate days there was a feeling of jealousy between the University and the Columbia College boys (I believe they all spoke of themselves as "men," by the way), and as the superiority of age was on the side of old Columbia, the college took airs upon itself accordingly. Theodore Frelinghuysen was Chancellor of the University then, if I remember, and his name, viewed socially and politically, was a tower of strength. I never pass the University building of

late years but I associate it with the "Cecil Dreeme" of Theodore Winthrop (poor fellow, the promise of his brilliant young life was dashed to pieces in the fight at Big Bethel), which has invested the structure with a fascinating interest.

Remembrance of the working-men's riot at the University induces me to step aside and visit the scene of the Astor Place riot. That was tragedy in dead earnest. A school-boy at the time, I remember the excitement that pervaded all classes as to the relative claims of Forrest and Macready. As a full-blooded American, I naturally stood up for home talent, and helped make life unpleasant for a youthful Londoner in my class at school. The sensation made by the bloodshed in Astor Place was like the opening of war at our doors. With a school-boy's curiosity, I was at the scene early the next morning, and sought out with eager interest some little dingy spots of red that were pointed out to sight-seers, and the places on the northern wall of the big house at the corner of Lafayette Place which had been chipped out by the bullets of the soldiery. It was not thought safe for my sisters to go to Mme. Okill's school at the corner of Clinton Place and Mercer Street that day, and I had the glory of having visited the seat of war all to myself. The riot left one unanswered conundrum: Who gave the order to fire? No one desired to claim the honor of issuing the command, and the officers of the militia finally settled down to the conviction that the bruised and battered soldiery began the fire themselves. The locality was then a fashionable centre; the slums invaded it, and left their mark upon it in blood.

But to return to Chelsea. London Terrace was a

charming place of residence forty years ago, and still retains much of its old-time beauty. A few years later the solid men of the lower wards on the west side began building in the upper section of Chelsea, between Eighth and Ninth avenues and Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth streets, and this locality to this day retains an air of eminent respectability, and its ample rear gardens are a ceaseless source of comfort to the residents. West of this settlement the city is still unattractive. It was a wild place when I was a boy, and the maintenance of the old Hudson River Railroad depot there still retards public and private improvements. But the river front is picturesque, and across the stream rise the heights of Hoboken, crowned by the Passionist monastery and church. The heights as they were, where nature left them covered with forest trees, were still prettier, but one can be grateful that man cannot mar the landscape utterly.

Two landmarks of old Chelsea remain unchanged. At the corner of Twenty-eighth Street and Ninth Avenue stands the old Church of the Holy Apostles—that is, it is old comparatively, though the painters have attired it in a new dress of red with brown trimmings. A generation ago the Rev. Dr. R. S. Howland was the rector, and the late Dr. George J. Geer was his assistant. They were excellent men, both of them, and Dr. Geer was always good company. One of my uncles was a vestryman of the church, and he told me the story of its foundation. A young man, son of a great ship-builder, determined to study for the ministry of the Episcopal Church, though his father was not of that faith. The son persisted, and the father made his will, cutting off the disobe-

dient son with the proverbial shilling. Ordained and in the ministry, but cut off from the wealth he should have inherited, the son kept on his way unmoved—but not unwatched by the father. Touched by his consistent conduct, the father made a new will, leaving to the once disinherited boy his entire possessions. Then the old man died. The son divided the property equally among the heirs, and out of his own share built the Church of the Holy Apostles as a thank-offering. A good lesson for a church-spire to teach.

Dr. Geer was always jolly, and dearly loved a good joke. The last time I saw him he told me how one day, some years before, as his sexton helped him to put on his surplice, he noticed that the man had on a most doleful countenance, and he asked him what was the matter. "Oh, Mr. Geer," said the sexton, "I wish we might have some Gospel preaching here. This morning the Methodist preacher at the Chelsea Church is going to improve the flood, and to-night he will improve the hanging. Can't you do it, too?" There had been an execution at the Tombs and a notable rise in the Hudson that week—hence the outburst of ecstasy.

The sturdy gray granite tower of old St. Peter's Church also shows no mark of the flight of years. On the contrary, I observe as I pass it with a tourist's eye that it has set itself off with certain modern furbelows in the shape of turreted wooden porticos at the doorways, as pardonable a vanity as the fresh violet ribbons with which my grandmother was wont to decorate her best Sunday cap. "It doesn't signify, Felix," she would say, "but I do like to see old folks spruce themselves up, and somehow I always want to look my best, even to my grandson."

There is a pathetic strain of association with the old church, which goes back to a day when a young student of divinity made more noise in the American ecclesiastical world than the whole bench of bishops. It was at the time when Puseyism, so called, was on everybody's tongue, and old-fashioned high and dry churchmen considered it a mortal sin for an officiating clergyman to "turn his back upon the congregation." On the day when Arthur Carey was to be ordained to the ministry, Drs. Smith and Anthon, rectors of St. Peter's and St. Mark's churches, respectively, stood up to object to proceeding with the service. Thence arose the wildest kind of an ecclesiastical circus. It was the beginning of a bitter persecution of the late Bishop Onderdonk, who ordained Mr. Carey, and for a while it divided clergy and people into warring factions, and made the diocesan conventions in old St. John's Chapel a species of theological bear-garden. Poor Carey! He had a short, sad life. A few months afterwards he died at sea, and when a kindly Presbyterian clergyman, who was somewhat suspicious of all ritualists, and knew of Mr. Carey only through the religious press, stood at his bedside and asked him if he placed all his reliance on his Saviour in that hour, the dying youth turned a reproachful look upon him and replied, "Of course I do." The clergyman said afterwards that he had never witnessed a more peaceful and edifying death, and bore high testimony to Arthur Carey's faith. It was the echo of this terrific ecclesiastical storm, with its wild warrings of good men and its undercurrent of pathos, that seemed to sweep around the turrets of old St. Peter's as I passed by.

Not far from the church, and occupying the entire

block between Twenty-second and Twenty-third streets and Eighth and Ninth avenues, stood, a generation ago, the picturesque home of Clement C. Moore. It had been the country-seat of his father, the second Bishop of New York, and the grading of the streets had left the entire block elevated twelve or fifteen feet above the sidewalk. The cosiest of suburban homes, it was

THE MOORE HOUSE

hidden by great oaks and elms, and outsiders had only glimpses of the loveliness of its surroundings. Here lived the kindliest of scholars, the most learned of college professors, the most assiduous of bookworms, a writer whose published works were held in highest reverence by the learned men of his day. But he is known to posterity by none of these sound claims to

reputation. A little rhyme, dashed off under this roof, when the trees were bare of leaves and the robins had departed, and written solely for the pleasure of his grandchildren, has made the name of Clement C. Moore a household word wherever the English tongue is spoken. Here he wrote the nursery rhyme that all childhood has since learned: "'Twas the Night Before Christmas;" and by this unsuspected little pathway he mounted up to fame.

It is a pity that green fields and bright gardens have to give place to bricks and mortar and bluestone pavements; and old Chelsea, in its prime, was a very hamlet of roses and romance. But, after all, as my grandmother would say, "It doesn't signify."

OLD FIRE BUCKET

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CHAPTER IV

TO ALBANY BY SLOOP—AN INCIDENT OF STEAMBOAT COMPETITION—THE ROMANCE OF A CONVICT—GENESIS OF FASHIONABLE PARKS—THE "PROFESSORSHIP OF NEW YORK"

"THAT was a terrible week."

It is my grandmother who is speaking. The old lady sits by the open window in a pleasant little cottage in Chelsea. Her best cap adorns her white hair, and the vanity of violet ribbons further sets it off. A lithe and beautiful cat is curled up cosily at her feet; and on the sofa, curled up in much the same fashion, is the hostess of my grandmother, the daughter of Dr. Cuthbert, who for half a century had a drug-store on Grand Street, half-way between Broadway and the Bowery.

"It doesn't signify," says my grandmother, falling gently into one of her favorite modes of expression, "but I shall never forget that week on the Albany schooner. We had a horrible storm in the Highlands, and we were all sea-sick and nearly wrecked; and then we were becalmed above Poughkeepsie for two days, and it took us just a week to make the voyage. I declare, I never see a schooner but it gives me a touch of sea-sickness. I wished afterwards," she added, innocently, "that we had got out and walked. And just to think that now the steamboats advertise to carry you to Albany for a shilling!"

She has told me often of her voyage up the Hud-

son, when the country was young. The sloop packet started from a wharf near the Battery. It sailed past the blooming gardens of Greenwich Village; by the frowning walls of the State prison at the foot of Amos Street; beyond the green fields that stretched out until the pretty little hamlet of Chelsea was reached, where the gray turrets of the Episcopal Seminary were at that time going up; and then swept by an unbroken succession of rural villas and manors up to the heights named in honor of Fort Washington, and thence looked back upon historic King's Bridge, the

KING'S BRIDGE

seething waters of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and the ample possessions of the Phillipse family and the Van Cortlandts.

That was a wonderfully exciting time when the rival steamboats advertised to carry passengers to Albany for a shilling, and an army of "runners" pervaded the streets and thronged the wharves, pulling and hauling at the persons and baggage of the unhappy victims. Racing was rife on the river, and there was always a tinge of excitement in the voyage, through the probability of a boiler explosion or a fire. The wreck of the *Swallow* and the burning of the *Henry Clay* are among

the memories of a day in which the names of the steam clippers of the Hudson (some of which still drag flotillas of canal-boats through the waters on which they once walked as queens) were as well known as the present favorites of the race-tracks.

There was a queer genius in my regiment named Bickford. His hair was red, and his stride was ungainly, but he would have been able to take care of himself either at the Court of St. James's or on a desert island. In search of his fortune, he drifted to New York at the time when the rivalry between steamboats was at its height. Bundle in hand, he suffered himself to be dragged on one of the boats by a runner, where he took his bearings and laid out his campaign. When the supper-bell sounded he seated himself at the table and laid in a square meal. When the steward came for his money, Bickford said he had none and didn't know any was wanted; that one fellow had offered to take him to Albany for a shilling, another for sixpence, and a third for nothing at all. So he had come along, and supposed he was to be taken care of for the pleasure of his company. The captain was summoned, and demanded to see the fool who was travelling free to Albany. Bickford's stolid assumption of ignorance was too much for the captain. "Never travelled before? Never saw a steamboat, eh? Well, this is fun; come right along." Bickford told the story in Libby Prison to a roomful of officers—he was then acting as my orderly—somewhat as follows: "The captain took me to the engine-room, and I was horrified at the sights and sounds there, of course. The engineer turned the steam and water on me, and I shrieked and they roared. I asked the curiousest questions I could

MAP OF
NEW YORK
Surveyed in 1782 and drawn in 1785
BY
JOHN HILLS

think of; asked them to light a candle and take me down-stairs into the kitchen, and up-stairs into the bedrooms; and they laughed till they cried. Then the captain introduced me to a cabin full of passengers as the biggest fool he had met yet. I never let on that I was anything but a fool, and I got a good bed that night, breakfast the next morning, and four or five dollars from the passengers to help me on my way. Fool! I wasn't half as big a fool as the captain, and they could squirt steam on me all night, as long as I was getting pay for it."

Queer are the pranks that time plays with old buildings. The State prison that once stood on Amos Street (West Tenth Street now) has been transformed into a brewery. Its white outside walls alone are unchanged, and serve to mark the locality; but even these, of late years, have been allied to red brick wings and other improvements in such a way as to take off much of their old-time bareness. The interior is all changed. The prison yard used to reach down to the river, and outside were sunny fields and a wide stretch of beach. Now, streets have been extended west of the prison site and far into the river, and buildings cover them, while beyond the new river line the great iron steamships of modern commerce nestle against the wharves. It is half a century since the inmates of the old prison were transferred to Sing Sing; and the city, excepting a few old people born in Greenwich Village or Chelsea, have forgotten all about the former home of the convict.

I never pass by the old prison walls but I think of a little episode that had its scene there, which developed a great deal of human nature. A young man had committed forgery and had been sentenced to

death. The preparations were all made for the execution, which was to take place in Washington Square, and a large crowd had gathered, when news came that a reprieve had been granted at the last hour. There were many bitter expressions of disappointment from

THE STATE PRISON

the sight-seers, among whom was a boy who subsequently told me the story. It appeared that some benevolent and active members of the Society of Friends had become interested in the criminal; and had secured the commutation of his sentence to imprisonment for life. Overjoyed at his escape from the gallows, the young man made himself a model prisoner, and was soon placed in charge of a shoe-shop, where he paraded up and down, rattan in hand, between the benches, and proved himself a terror to his fellow-convicts. Virtue has its reward. The kindly Quakers left no stone unturned until they had secured his pardon, and then the devout convert was set up in a shoe-shop of his own, where he handled the "thee" and "thou" and the cash to perfection. At last he had become a man of consequence among the Quakers and a man of mark in the business community, and then he saw his op-

portunity and seized it. One day he turned up missing. He had converted all his assets into cash, had gathered in a golden harvest by forging the names of all his business friends, and had crowned his iniquity by eloping with the pretty Quaker daughter of the generous benefactor who had secured his release from the gallows. New York never saw him again.

His career had not been without its thorns in the mean time. The shadow of a dangling noose sometimes came athwart the sunshine. One day he had been in a towering passion with one of his workmen because he had not finished a pair of shoes at the time he had promised. He told the man he had no right to break his promise and disappoint him. "Master," said the man, quietly, "you have disappointed me worse than that." "How did I, you rascal? When?" "When I waited a whole hour in the rain to see you hanged!"

In the old Dutch colonial days the executions of criminals took place outside the Battery, on the beach. Under the English the scene was transferred to the Commons, the present City Hall Park. In the present century executions took place in the vicinity of Houston and Wooster streets, and then on the open ground now known as Washington Square. Criminals were buried under the gallows in all these places, and it is a curious fact that most of our smaller parks were not reserved as pleasure places, but for public use in the interment of paupers. The upper portion of the City Hall Park was originally a potter's field, and adjoining it was a negro burial-ground that extended across Chambers Street. Washington Square was used not only as a burial-place for paupers, but also for yellow-fever patients, and the ashes of the dead lie thick

under its green patches of sward and stately elms. Subsequently a potter's field was opened at Madison Square, adjoining the public buildings that once stood there—the House of Refuge occupying the site of the Worth Monument. Fashion enjoys the lovely little park, but little recks that it owes its pleasant shade to the tramps and the criminals whose bones lie mouldering beneath the grass and flowers.

It is a grateful incident in connection with this summer tour around New York—begun originally with the idea of showing to the modern race of Gothamites how much there is within their local boundaries to interest and inspire them — that these papers have brought to the writer a number of appreciative letters of encouragement. One suggests that it would be a good thing to tell the story of the old merchants who lived in Pearl and Broad streets, and on lower Broadway, and whose social habits would form a striking contrast to the club-life of to-day. Another speaks of Washington Square in its ancient glory, when the Alsops, Rhinelanders, Robinsons, and other solid old families had their homes facing its elms, and not far away lived the Grinnells, Bogerts, Leroys, Minturns, and Livingstons. This letter recalled in one of its suggestions a man of mark who but recently passed away in Italy, and who, in his prime, I thought to be the handsomest man in the city. This was James E. Cooley, of the firm of Cooley, Keese & Hill, auctioneers, whose home was on Macdougal Street, near Washington Square, and who was an accomplished scholar as well as genial gentleman. A third letter expresses the hope that, in some future article, the writer will "indulge us in a more detailed account of

the old residents about St. John's Park, and what has become of them and their descendants. Take Beach Street, for instance. There were the Parets, Robert B. Minturn, Wm. Whitlock, the Hyslops, John C. Hamilton, the Smedbergs, Tracys, and George Griffin, with his blue side-winged spectacles, and broad shoes constructed for comfort. And then on Laight Street, Dr. Wilkes, Dr. Green, the Lydigs, and all of them. Let us hear about them all."

A writer in the *Evening Post* once suggested the propriety of founding a "Professorship of New York" at Columbia College, with the idea of imparting to the student of society accurate knowledge of the city in which we move and have our being. That was an admirable idea. The modern writer of press letters or articles about this city knows in society only the very recent Mrs. Potiphar and her friends. For him the old names of the past have no meaning. Yet the Knickerbocker race is not extinct. It sounds no trumpets and creates no sensations. To its charmed circle the golden eagle is no passport of admission. There was a youth of tender years, born in Connecticut, and who had never strayed beyond its borders, who was asked at a school examination which were the principal rivers of the world. He promptly responded, "The Scantic, the Podunck, and the Connecticut." On the same principle the average exotic who chronicles the social doings of the metropolis runs over the gamut of a few modern millionaires and their kin, and does not dream that he has not done full justice to his theme. As for the historical points that could make every nook and corner of the city a romance, they are outside of his knowledge. By all means we should have the professorship.

CHAPTER V

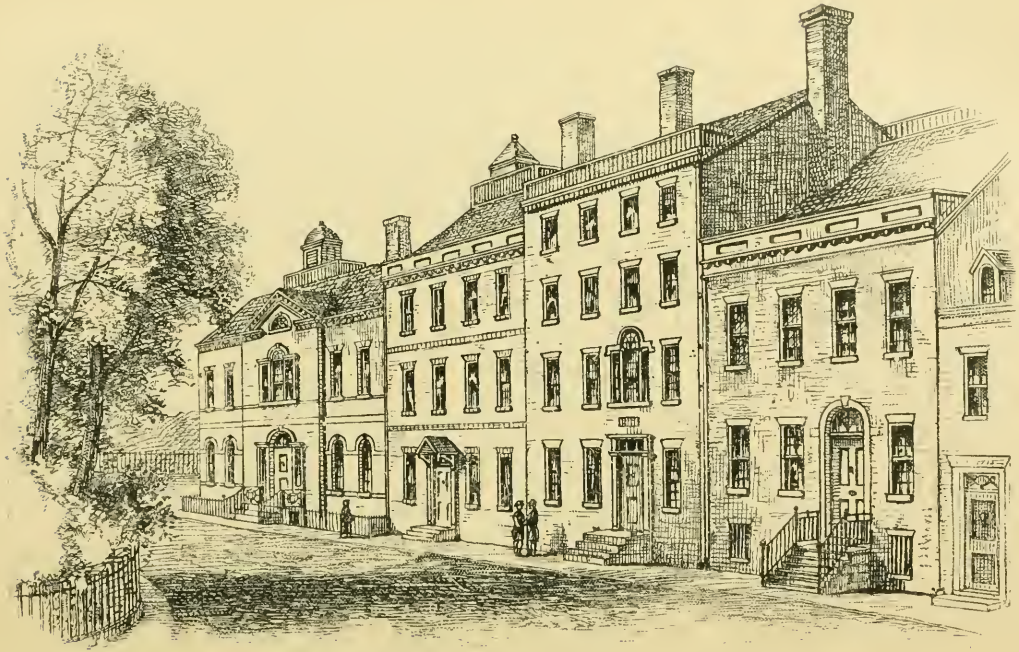
ECHOES OF THE STREETS—MERCHANTS OF A PAST GENERATION—SOLID MEN WHO ENJOYED LIFE—MUSEUM DAYS—THE OLD AUCTIONEERS —THE HEROES OF COMMERCE

THURLOW WEED once said to me that he regarded the description of the thronging footsteps that beset the house of Dr. Manette, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, as the most wonderful piece of descriptive writing that Charles Dickens had penned. He quoted, in illustration, this passage: "The footsteps were incessant, and the hurry of them became more and more rapid. The corner echoed and re-echoed with the tread of feet; some, as it seemed, under the windows; some, as it seemed, in the room; some coming, some going, some breaking off, some stopping altogether; all in the distant streets, and no one in sight." When I walk along lower Broadway in the quiet night, as sometimes happens, I hear the hurry of those footsteps on the deserted pavement. They bring back to me the faces of the dead—the white-haired patriarchs to whom I looked up with reverence as a boy; the stalwart men whose sturdy strength seemed to defy all change; the manly youth who bore the names that commerce, professional life, or literature had delighted to honor. They surely are not dead who have left such pleasant memories behind them.

Among the thronging footsteps of those whose memories still haunt lower Broadway are scores of our

old merchants, whose names I recall as some familiar circumstance or legend of old business days brings them back. It would make a list too long to print if all could be remembered and given the honor due them. When I was a boy the familiar names of the street were Aspinwall, Gracie, Howland, Coit, Minturn, Aymar, Lenox, Bruce, Griswold, Hoyt, Kortright, Haight, Storms, Morgan, Wilmerding, King, Ingoldsby, Broome, Laight, Dash, Lorillard, Henriques, Wolfe, Ogden, Crolius, and — *Eheu, jam satis!* Looked at from this point of time, they seem to me like men who magnified their position and strove to make the name of merchant great. They were not above taking their share in politics and doing their best to keep politics pure. The first alderman elected after the Revolutionary War was a wealthy shipping merchant of this city, John Broome, who was three times elected Lieutenant-governor (and the last time without opposition), and in whose honor one of the counties of this State was named. Since his time another merchant and alderman, E. D. Morgan, has been made Governor and United States Senator; but he was not a native of the city, and brought his ambition with him from Connecticut.

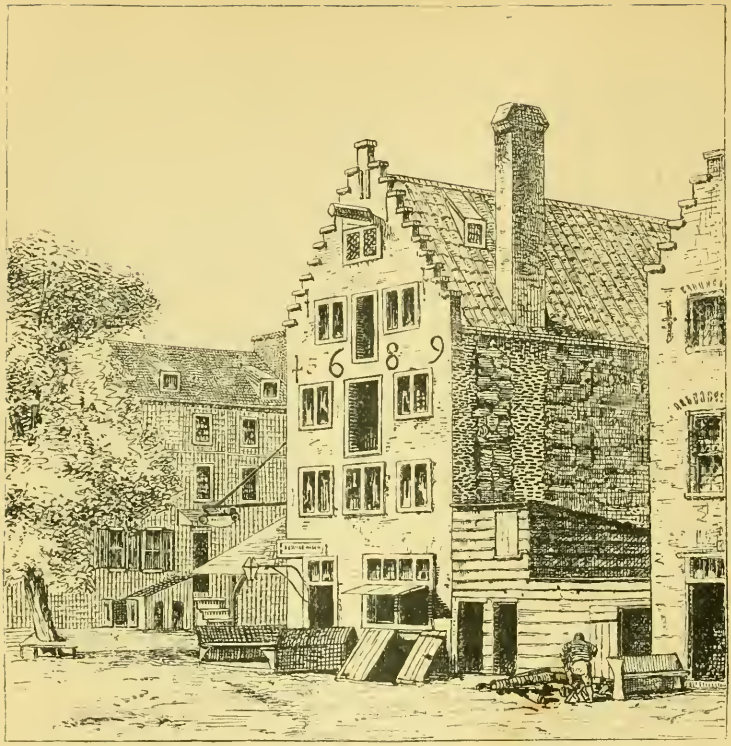
The Hall of Records, the old sugar-house on Rose Street, and "Sam Fraunce's tavern," on Broad Street, still remain to recall the ante-Revolutionary buildings of this city; but I have heard old men tell of the time when the east side below Fulton Street was studded with quaint, antique Dutch buildings that had served at once as store and home to the old-time merchants. The great fire of 1835 swept away nearly all of these relics of the city's old life, the last that remained being



THE KENNEDY, WATTS, LIVINGSTON, AND STEVENS HOUSES

located on William Street, opposite Sloate Lane, and bearing on its front, in sprawling letters, the date 1690. Gabled roofs, wide chimneys, and small windows were the characteristics of these dwellings. Their English successors were more lofty and much more luxurious, in many cases aspiring to marble mantel-pieces and huge mirrors in heavy mahogany frames, but not infrequently retaining the wide fireplace, with its setting of tiles that illustrated usually the stories of the Bible. A fine specimen of these Scriptural tiles, in blue and white, and most quaintly original, can be still seen in the old Van Cortlandt House, above Kingsbridge, within the area of Van Cortlandt Park. It is to be hoped that the Park Commissioners will preserve this ancient structure, erected in 1748, which vividly recalls the days when it was an outpost in the Neutral Ground, and was occupied alternately by Hessian videttes and patriot scouts, from whose doors Washington sallied forth in full uniform when he began his triumphal march to New York on Evacuation Day, 1783.

Comparatively little business was done on the east side of Broadway below the City Hall Park when I first began to observe that locality as a boy. There were many boarding-houses there, occupying what had been the stately homes of the Lows, Hamiltons, Delafields, Livingstons, Ludlows, Le Roys, Hoffmans, and Coldens. There were several hotels there also, the Howard, Tremont, and National. But that side of the street was immortal among boys as containing Barnum's American Museum, and close by was the store of John N. Genin, the hatter, who made himself fame and fortune by bidding off at a high premium the first seat sold for the first concert given by Jenny



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Lind. My grandmother has told me of the great dry-goods store which Jotham Smith, the A. T. Stewart of his day, opened on the place occupied afterwards by Barnum's Museum, and of its removal to a larger building on the site of the Astor House, where all the ladies in town went to do their shopping. But what are dry goods in comparison with the perennial pleasures of the museum, where I am certain that I had carefully investigated every article on exhibition

many score of times, and had no more doubt of the authenticity of the club that killed Captain Cook (destroyed by fire when the museum was burned, but risen again, like the Phœnix, from its own ashes and still on exhibition) than I had of the doctrines contained in the Church Catechism? I liked also to visit Peale's Museum, on Broadway, opposite the City Hall Park, but not so well as the temple of curiosities at the corner of Ann Street. The former was the successor of Scudder's Museum, that occupied the old Alms House in the park, and was the first of its kind in the city.

In the days when I was on familiar terms of acquaintance with the museum, not a few of my schoolmates lived in the vicinity, in Beekman and Barclay streets, and on the streets adjacent to the Park, and upon lower Broadway. Their fathers had stores or offices down-town, mostly east of Broadway, and they liked to be near to their business, as their fathers had been accustomed to live before them. Business men who lived up-town—that is, between Broome Street and Union Square—rarely rode to their offices. They walked and enjoyed the exercise. One could take his stand on Broadway on a pleasant afternoon and call the roll among passers-by of all the remarkable men in town. It came back to me the other afternoon—that busy Broadway panorama of forty years ago came back—when I saw John Jacob Astor striding sturdily down the great thoroughfare towards Wall Street. The "Astor boys" could then be seen daily walking from their Prince Street office, a stalwart pair, pointed out as heirs to wealth that was supposed to be limitless, and marvelled at as miracles of industry amid the

temptations of money. As for the Vanderbilts, they lived quietly on East Broadway, and the Commodore and his brother had offices at 62 Broadway, where they were weaving the maritime web that was to bring them in their millions. As a rule, wealth was not worshipped then. The old Knickerbocker spirit still ruled, and demanded blood and brains as the standard of admission to society. Wealth was an honorable and most comfortable addition thereto, but it was not a *sine qua non.*

As I pause on this lower end of the City Hall Park, where the footsteps seem to come thickest, I recall some names among the old auctioneers of the city whose associations, either through school or church or society connections, bring back forms that have long been dust. The names are those of Pell, Hoffman, Lawrence, Haggerty, Draper, Minturn, and Hone, and, earliest of all, the Bleeckers. Fifty or sixty years ago the auctioneers were commissioned by the Governor of the State, and for many a year no one but a Democrat could obtain a commission at Albany. Smart young Loco-focos thus managed to force themselves into solid old firms and line their pockets. The auctioneer was obliged to give a bond to the State for five thousand dollars, with two good sureties, that he would faithfully pay the duties accruing on his sales. These auction duties formed one of the important items in the canal fund, and amounted to several hundred thousand dollars. As the lists were made public, it became a matter of pride with each house to swell their own duties to as large a sum as possible by way of advertising themselves. The auction houses then centred in Pearl, in the vicinity of Wall Street. I

recall in the personnel of those firms Lindley M. Hoffman, the pink of courtesy, and a most devoted churchman; ex-Mayor Cornelius W. Lawrence, a genial and genuine Knickerbocker; handsome Philip Hone, Anthony J. Bleecker, who afterwards headed the list of auctioneers, and David Austen, who, as knights of the hammer, held the field against all opponents.

It has seemed to me, as I linger on this old battle-ground of business generations, that our city takes too little pride in its merchants. More is known about our soldiers and our politicians than about our commercial champions, and more honor is paid them. Yet

THE JAIL (NOW THE HALL OF RECORDS)

if one could gather up the legends and traditions of mercantile lives, it would be found more interesting than the history of our wars, and far more instructive.

Around their old homes lingers an aroma of quiet romance which history ought to preserve. A sturdy, independent folk, they enjoyed life thoroughly in their own way, and made the most of it. Nor were they a solemn people—far from it. They loved a joke, even at their own expense.

When old John Broome kept store at No. 6 Hanover Square he had his residence in the upper part of the same house. On one occasion, after a customer had called, he took him up-stairs for the customary glass of wine. Pianos were rare in those days, and the stranger had never seen one; so Mr. Broome called one of his daughters to play a tune. The visitor listened with delight, but kept fumbling uneasily in his pocket, and when she had finished the tune he pulled a half-dollar out and laid it before the daughter. She blushed, laughed, and glanced at her father, who chuckled, winked, and signed to her to keep it.

Odd stories used to be told of eccentric old Stephen Storm, who was in business in Water Street, and with one of whose boys I went to school. He was fond of music, and used to start the tunes at Dr. Matthews's church in Garden Street before it was moved up-town. It occurred to Mr. Storm at one time to learn to play upon the fiddle, and accordingly he inserted an advertisement in the papers informing the public of his desire to purchase a violin. The next day the whole colored colony of the city was in attendance at his store with violins under their arms, reinforced by a large contingent of foreigners. One by one they were solemnly marshalled in, and each was invited to play a tune. The street grew distracted, and threatened mob law. After a hundred or more instruments had been

tested, Mr. Storm dismissed the crowd, without his benediction, however. In the years to come Mr. Storm never again ventured to indulge his musical taste, at least in the instrumental line.

The name recalls the old Storm's Hotel, which stood on the site of the *Staats Zeitung* building, and was a noted hostlery in its day. Major Noah used to tell, with many a chuckle, a story that associated the elder Astor with the hotel. One of the old fur merchant's book-keepers had reached the age of sixty, and was to be retired. Mr. Astor gave him the choice of a gift of $1000 in cash or a promise to pay his board bill while he lived. The superannuated clerk chose the promise to pay instead of the cash, and lived for twenty years at the Storm's Hotel at the expense of John Jacob Astor, who failed to find anything amusing in his longevity.

No man was better known in New York half a century ago than this same Major Noah. He was a man of wonderful wit, erudition, and social and political power. The contemporary of James Watson Webb and the older editors, whose down-town sanctums were fully as dreary as the dens of the lawyers and business men of their day, he wielded a pen as keen as his wit. It was he who, when Minister to Algiers, persuaded the Dey to make a most favorable treaty with the United States, on the ground that it was not a Christian nation—which he proceeded to prove by reference to the Constitution. The Dey was delighted to get ahead of France and England, to whom he had promised to sign no treaty with another Christian nation.

But the tourist cannot linger longer with the ghosts of the past, and so he passes on, with the expression of

a hope that the time is not distant when the city will build monuments to commemorate its commercial heroes, and rescue the names of Livingston and Lewis and Broome and their business peers from oblivion. Some day the ghostly cadence of their footsteps will cease on our busy streets, when we, who are gray-haired and learned about them when young, shall have followed also to their rest.

SEAL OF NEW YORK CITY

CHAPTER VI

BROADWAY IN SIMPLER DAYS—AMONG THE OLD-TIME THEATRES—MAY MEETINGS AT THE TABERNACLE—THE FIRST SEWING-MACHINE—BROADWAY GARDENS AND CHURCHES—A NIGHT WITH CHRISTY'S MINSTRELS—THE RAVELS AT NIBLO'S

"DO you know," I said to a friend, recently, as we dived into a crowded train on the elevated railroad, "I think we take less exercise than we did a generation ago, and are degenerating? In the matter of legs I am quite sure the decadence must be marked. The revived fashion of knee-breeches, now impending, will find us unable to cope with the traditionary anatomies of stalwart George Washington, who was a prodigious jumper, and sturdy John Adams, whose lower limbs were solid as the granite hills that stood around his home. The art of walking has gone out of fashion with us, and it has operated to our physical loss."

"Do you know," calmly responded my friend, "I think you are growing old, and, as is the way with all who cultivate a sere and yellow acquaintance with old Father Time, are learning to grumble at the present, just because it is somewhat juvenile?"

Can this be true? My old friend Bowie Dash remarked to a common acquaintance the other day that, judging by my reminiscences, I must be somewhere in the neighborhood of ninety-five. As to Mr. Dash's suggestion of age, I quite scorn it. Did not the same ruler warm us up, anatomically and intellectually,

when we two were neophytes in the temple of learning in Franklin Street, over which Mr. Jeremiah J. Greenough presided? Indeed, we are both young—comparatively. Yet a newer generation can behold in our reminiscences, as in a mirror, the day when street-cars were unknown, omnibuses a rarity, and when, in the absence of furnaces, heaters, and self-feeding stoves, the boy was solemnly admonished, as winter drew nigh, that pedestrian exercise was the best thing to keep his blood in circulation and help him defy the blasts of December.

Everybody walked to and from business when I was a boy. That is, everybody except those who lived in the outskirts of Greenwich Village and in Chelsea, who went by stages, and except a few invalids and octogenarians. It told against a man to pamper himself with sixpenny rides in an omnibus. Besides, one always counted on meeting acquaintances upon the Broadway promenade at certain hours, and the hearty greetings of one's elders were worth something, as we juniors thought. It was a physical pleasure to throw one's self into the tide of human life that swept up the great central thoroughfare every afternoon, and to strike out homeward with it. The white-haired crest upon the human wave disappeared after a while as the club-house, the down-town home, or the political headquarters drew it in, and then, rosy and radiant, a reflex tide of feminine loveliness swept in, and the walk became more pleasant than ever. Yes, everybody walked in those days, and, as I grew out of boyhood towards manhood, I used to think that the rosebud garden of Broadway on a crisp autumn afternoon was lovely beyond compare. The tide of pedestrians be-

gan noticeably to diverge to the left at Chambers Street, and both to right and left above Canal Street, making decided détours towards St. John's Park and Washington Square in turn, and growing more and more scattered as it approached the up-town neighborhood above Great Jones Street and Astor Place.

I like still on brisk autumn days to turn my face to Union Square, and take up my march from the neighborhood of old St. Paul's. If some one is with me who is interested in my gray-haired garrulity about other days, it makes the way lighter. But I never lack company. Indeed, paradoxical as it may seem, it is when I am alone that I have most companionship. As I walk along, the ghosts of other days trip out to see me. They are no noisome apparitions, but gentle, sweet-voiced spirits, whose eyes are filled with tender recollections, and whose garments bear the scent of the roses and hyacinths of many years ago. From unexpected spots they dart out to give me greeting and to bring to my recollection little occurrences long forgotten, but pleasant to recall. In this spot they recall a rosy night at the theatre; there they bring back the tender recollection of a school friend who has been dust and ashes these five and thirty years; here they call up Sunday-school days, and the prolonged and inevitable Sunday services beneath the stately spire of St. John's Chapel; here again, just around that corner, lived the incarnate inspiration of my first valentine, whose clustering curls never lived to sleep on any other breast than Mother Earth's; and there, too, opposite the St. Nicholas, were the mystic rooms in which our college secret society met to initiate white-faced neophytes into the mysteries of sworn fra-

ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL

ternity, while all around the pavement echoes to the feet which are silent to the rest of the world, but to my ears are instinct with a life that can never die. Come with me, then, most patient reader, and as we walk up Broadway this afternoon, close your eyes to present surroundings, and let me picture the thorough-

fare as it looked forty years ago, when I strolled up from a school-mate's home below the City Hall Park, a rosy-cheeked boy in old-fashioned roundabout and cap.

St. Paul's Church has been growing smaller of late years, or is it the effect of the great buildings that surround it? It towered up above all the neighborhood when I was a boy, and at one time I had an uncanny dread of the marble figure of St. Paul above the portico, which was said to come down and walk the street "when it heard the clock strike twelve at midnight of St. Paul's Day." The late William E. Dodge, who was so earnest a man that he never appreciated a joke, in the course of a familiar lecture to some east-side youth said that his nurse once told him that that same figure of St. Paul "came down and walked around the streets at night," thus wickedly deceiving him, and Mr. Dodge used the occasion to warn his young friends against telling falsehoods.

Barnum's Museum, which faced St. Paul's Church at the corner of Ann Street, has disappeared long since, and I fear that I have never ceased to mourn its loss. Wasn't it a wonderful place, though? The oval pictures of impossible birds and beasts that stood between the outside windows were a scientific spectacle in themselves. But the interior was one vast temple of wonder, and I never would have forgiven the man who should prove to me that the club which killed Captain Cook was not genuine; that Joyce Heth had not held baby George Washington in her black arms; and that the dark, dank little amphitheatre was not a dramatic paradise, in which performances were given upon a cramped and rather dirty

stage through so much of the day that Artemus Ward said Barnum's actors could be seen towards 7 A.M. walking down Broadway to work, with their tin dinner-pails in hand.

Broadway, between the Astor House and Chambers Street, has changed less in forty years than almost any other portion of the city. The park has undergone much more change. The Post-office has blotted out an oasis of grass and trees, and with the old iron fence a small army of hucksters in gingerbread and candy have disappeared. On the Broadway side of the park stood Peale's Museum. I remember only one thing about it: The largest room contained the skeleton of a mastodon, at whose feet stood the tiny skeleton of a mouse. Opposite the museum, on Park Row, the famous Park Theatre was located. I stood in the City Hall Park one night and watched its roof-tree fall into the flames that devoured the building. An engine dashing along the sidewalk of Broadway had nearly run over me as I came. We all ran to fires in those days, and the engines took the sidewalk or the street, just as suited their convenience. I never was inside the Park Theatre, but how have I enjoyed *Aminidab Sleek* and *Captain Cuttle* at Burton's Theatre in Chambers Street.

At one corner of Chambers Street the Stewart Building is a modern innovation. It displaced, among other structures, famous Washington Hall, the political foe of Tammany Hall, built by the Federalists, and occupied as their fighting headquarters for many years. The building on the opposite corner of Chambers Street and Broadway was once the Irving House, a fashionable hostlery, but it has an older memory for

THE BURNING OF BARNUM'S MUSEUM

WASHINGTON HALL

some of us graybeards. There at one time John C. Colt had his office, and there he murdered Adams, the printer who was getting out a work on book-keeping for him. It was the first tragedy I had ever been able to read about, and I remember vividly all the details of the body that was packed and shipped to South America; that by adverse winds was brought ashore, and would have brought the murderer to the scaffold had he not committed suicide on the morning of the day set for his execution. Years and years afterwards I met Col. Samuel Colt, who always favored the rumor that his brother had escaped to France, and that the body of a pauper convict had been substi-

tuted to deceive the authorities. "Is your brother John living in France?" asked a curious Hartford man. The answer was prompt and characteristic: "That is something which only God Almighty and Sam Colt know."

Somewhere near Duane Street, on Broadway, where modern progress has as yet made little change in the buildings, the first sewing-machine was exhibited. A young girl used to sit in the window and work the rather primitive machinery, and she actually seemed to sew. Everybody watched the process with interest, but all regarded it as a toy, and impracticable for household use. The ladies set their faces resolutely against it. They would have nothing but hand-made goods. Philanthropy argued at all our tables, as I remember, that the machine would take the bread out of the mouths of the working-women. So the pretty girl kept the pedals going in the window, month in and month out, and Wall Street was not sharp enough to see that there was a fortune in the "toy." It might be made to sew a ruffle—yes, no doubt this had been done — but to argue that it could make a suit of clothes or do the sewing for a household was nonsense.

Just above stood the old New York Hospital, its green campus, filled with stately trees, facing Pearl Street. In the rear were the gray granite buildings which had been erected before the Revolutionary War, and which Lord Howe had surrounded with fortifications. It always seemed a pity to destroy this pretty green spot, but perhaps it was inevitable. Its destruction followed the obliteration of the campus of Columbia College at Park Place, and it was pitiable to

watch the felling of the sturdy old trees that at both these points had withstood the storms of a century, and had looked down upon the camp-fires alike of the redcoat of England and the buff and blue soldier of the Continental Congress. Other obliterations were more natural. Here, on the east side of Broadway, between Pearl and Anthony, stood the Broadway Theatre, beloved of fashion in its day; on the next block was the Broadway Tabernacle, the camping-ground of the May meetings, where I stole in often to hear the abolitionists speak when I was a boy—Wendell Phillips, Gerrit Smith, and the lovely little white-haired Quakeress, Lucretia Mott. I thought these last a horrible crew of fanatics, for I had been bred in the doctrine that slavery was no sin; but there was a wonderful fascination for me in those gatherings of long-haired, wild-eyed agitators. Time works wonders, and yet the wildest prophet would not have ventured to predict that the boy who looked upon an abolitionist as a special ally of the Evil One would one day command a regiment marching through this city and through the border States to the fields of the South, to strike the shackles from the limbs of the enslaved African.

Between Leonard Street and Catharine Lane stood the Society Library building, a handsome structure in its day, which afterwards gave place to the publishing house of D. Appleton & Co. At Leonard Street there was a hotel known as the Carleton House; and there was another at Walker Street, known as Florence's Hotel; and below, on the other side, at the north corner of Franklin Street, was the famous Taylor's restaurant, frequented by all the society belles of the day.

More than one local romance has made Taylor's its scene of fashionable dissipation. Fashion has moved miles up-town since then, and would now vote Taylor's a very commonplace affair. But a much more attractive place in the early part of the forties was Contoit's Garden, which for more than a generation occupied a large share of the block between Franklin and Leonard streets. Its plain wooden entrance, bearing the legend, "New York Garden," was overshadowed with trees, and inside were shady nooks, dimly lit by colored lanterns, where the young woman of the period found it pleasant to sip her cream and listen to the compliments of the young man of the times. Many a match was made in these old gardens, which to-day would seem to the eye but the acme of rural simplicity, but to the older city offered all that was enjoyable on a moonlight night in the Island of Manhattan.

Crossing Canal Street—where changes are slow in coming on account of the low-lying nature of the land —as soon as one begins to mount the grade beyond Howard Street, the tokens of improvement lie thick on every side. All the landmarks have disappeared save one—the artistic beauty of Grace Church in the distance. That edifice is just as fresh and attractive to the eye as when its Gothic walls were first reared—more than forty years ago. Other churches along the line have disappeared. Old St. Thomas's, which for many years stood gray and venerable at the corner of Broadway and Houston Street, has long since given place to stores, and few remember where, on the other side of the way, Dr. Chapin ministered to large congregations. The church was situated at 548 Broad-

THE RESIDENCE OF PHILIP HONE, BROADWAY, NEAR PARK PLACE

way. Opposite, at 563, the Anglo-American Church of St. George the Martyr held forth, to which we boys of Trinity choir had contributed by singing at a concert, but which afterwards, I believe, died a lingering death. The Church of the Messiah was at 724 Broadway. But the churches of that period for the most part kept out of Broadway, and preferred the seclusion of the more quiet side streets.

I have spoken of the old-time theatres, and as I pass the site of Mechanics' Hall a whole host of memories comes trooping out, and with them comes the echo of old plantation songs, most of which were first heard here. It was on this spot that Christy's Minstrels used to entertain the older New York in a decorously jovial manner. There was none of the pinchbeck glare of modern dance-and-song minstrelsy, but there was instead the song that wakened the tenderest chords of the heart and the joke that was not yet worn threadbare. It happened that when I was twelve years old, or perhaps a little older, I was deputed at home to take six or eight children to Christy's. I was the oldest boy in the crowd, and hence felt myself the man of the deputation. But there was a thorn to my rose. My very small brother, aged five, was to go, in charge of a stately colored girl of eighteen, whom my father had brought from the West Indies. I remember being just goose enough to be half ashamed to be seen with Ancilla in the street, though she was straight and handsome as an Indian princess in her bright turban, and afterwards captivated and married a wealthy white man in California. At the ticket-office they refused to let us in because there was a "nigger" in the crowd of juveniles. The cold sweat was standing at every pore

in my body, when there chanced along a belated member of the troupe, who took my money, led us through the room in which the company were being "corked," and seated us in the little side orchestra gallery which overlooked the long hall. There we were the observed of all observers. The minstrels all cracked their jokes at Ancilla, who leaned over the orchestra rail and grinned back to a delighted audience, who applauded her shrieks of laughter to the echo. To me it was an evening of prolonged and undiluted misery, for which I learned to despise myself afterwards. But it all comes back to me this afternoon as I walk by the spot, remembering that Ancilla and I are the only survivors of the little party that filled the Mechanics' Hall orchestra gallery that evening.

How I would like to go to Christy's again, and what a treat it would be to enter the old Niblo's Garden and see the Ravels in their wonderful pantomimes! Surely, no place since then has held so much enjoyment for youth who have outgrown the museum, and yet have scarcely grown up to Shakespeare. And yet I must not forget the Broadway Theatre, where, as a boy in close jacket, I remember to have thoroughly enjoyed Hackett's masterly representation of Falstaff. He first opened to me the delights of Shakespeare—a debt which I shall ever owe him. Peace to his ashes! But it seems to me that I can recall now every trick of the Ravels, every oddity of their marvellous pantomime, every strange costume, from crowned king to skeleton death. Were ever nights so enjoyable to us old boys as those we passed in trying to detect the legerdemain that cheated our eyes? And how quickly they passed, and how rare were these treats in the

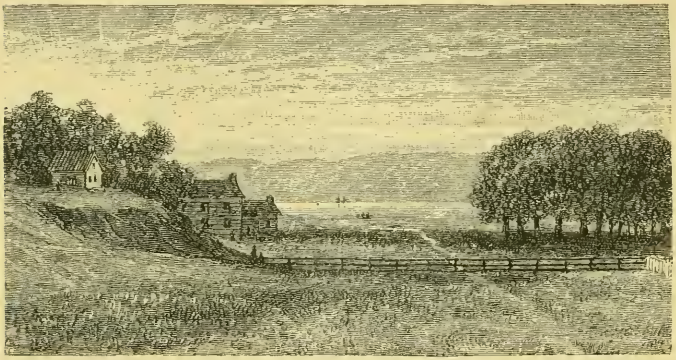
rigid economy of a scholar's life of years ago! Why, it is a delight even to remember them—a remark which I think one Horace, of collegiate class-room memory, has previously made in much the same connection.

I was at Niblo's Garden the night that the Ravels opened there, as I recall by the incident that the scenery refused to work in the last act, and left a massive brick wall as a rear view of Hades. An uncle of mine, a visitor to New York from the rural regions of Missouri, had taken me there, and when the ballet appeared I noticed that he covered his eyes with his hat and blushed. When I asked him what was the matter, he replied that "it beat the West all to pieces." To a New York boy his Western innocence rather lent flavor to the entertainment, which in fact was perfectly respectable, and such as the modern theatre-goer might have thought to be a trifle slow in its spectacular effects. I only wish that I could carry to the theatre of to-day the same zest that I brought to old Niblo's, and that the world of amusement-goers were as easily pleased.

But we have really not yet reached Niblo's Garden in our walk, and the shades of evening begin to fall as we stand just beyond the stream that once swept down from the Collect Pond to the Hudson River and on the edge of the Lispenard Meadows. Stream and swamp have disappeared, and stately rows of houses have taken their places, but the old student of New York's history knows the ground on which he stands, and it has wonderfully pleasant recollections for him. To-morrow we will take up our march again.

To the Easy Chair of *Harper's Magazine*, of whom the writer has pleasant personal memories in connection with the Constitutional Convention of 1867–68, Fe-

lix Oldboy desires to return thanks for a most appreciative notice in a recent number of that periodical. It is a double delight to receive such a compliment from the author of *The Potiphar Papers*, to whom, in common with a generation of New Yorkers, the writer is



LISPENARD MEADOWS

indebted for the most suggestive and brilliant society sketch to which New York's literary brain has given birth. The pleasure of writing these reminiscences of a day not yet so distant but that it seems like yesterday is heightened by the interest manifested in many different quarters, and encourages the writer to grasp his pilgrim staff again and proceed upon his tour.

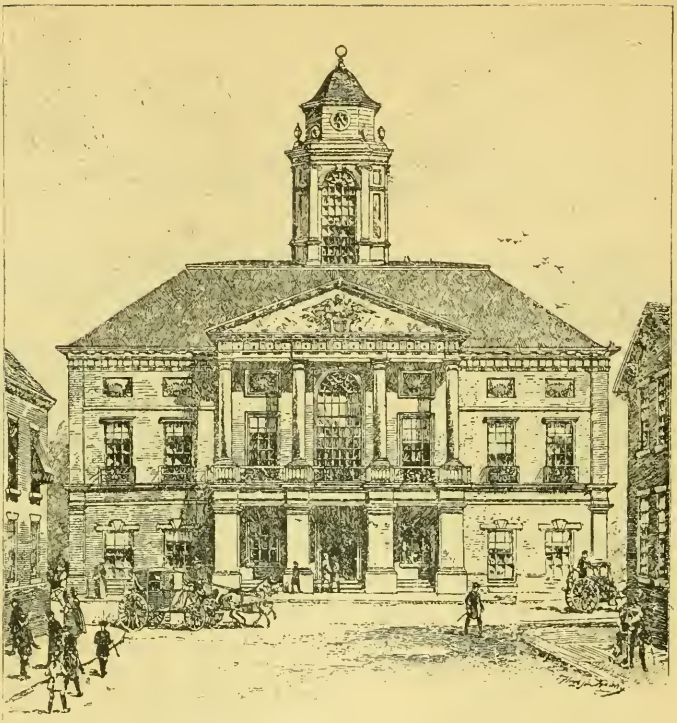
CHAPTER VII

THE POETRY OF EVERY-DAY LIFE—A PROTEST AGAINST THE GOTH—MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOME—AN ERA WITHOUT LUXURIES—STATELY MANNERS OF THE PAST

I HAVE been visited by the Goths and Vandals, and I want to stop right here—in sight of Kalckhook Hill and the Lispenard Swamp—and enter my solemn protest against them.

"Oldboy," said the chief of the invaders, with a Vandal familiarity which I detest, for I am old-fashioned enough to like to have the "Mr." prefixed to my name, not so much for being a *Magister Artium* in the past as for having been educated in the creed which makes the finer courtesies of life the touchstone of the gentleman—"Oldboy, you can't make a silver whistle out of a sow's ear—you can't put any poetry into prosaic, old, money-making New York."

To which I respond with proper mildness that the proposition in regard to any creative act of mine is perfectly true, since I am but a quiet chronicler in the city's by-ways, but that the poetry is there none the less. In the years in which my feet have trodden these streets I have learned to love them, and out of this love has grown an intimate acquaintance with the dower this city acquired from nature and from history, as well as with the lives and fortunes of its people. Truly, there is no need of any pen attempting to make poetry of the wonderful epic that began with



THE FEDERAL HALL IN WALL STREET

the ripples that the *Halve Maen* carved in the still waters of a bay crossed as yet only by the canoes of the Manhadoes.

No poetry here? Why, there is nothing but poetry in the story of Wouter Van Twiller, the pioneer Governor, and Petrus Stuyvesant, the exile of the Bouwerie; in Jacob Leisler, first martyr to popular liberties, and Captain Kidd, the piratical protégé of an earl; in the rise of the Liberty Boys, and their battle of Golden Hill, in which the first blood of the Revolution was shed—before the Boston massacre occurred—and in

the overthrow of Rivington's royal printing-press; in Washington, at the head of his "old Continentals," listening to the reading of the Declaration of Independence at the Commons, and in Putnam's dusty flight from the Bowling Green to the heights of Spuyten Duyvel; in the defeat at Fort Washington and the victory at Harlem Plains; in the original Evacuation Day and the inauguration of the first President; in the republican life of the city from her first hour of freedom from a royal yoke up to the day in which she rejected at the polls the monstrous system of socialism that foreign craft sought to impose upon her children.

To me it is all a sweet and stately epic, and especially tender is the strain that tells of the day when I was young. For was there no poetry in the life of the old New Yorker of that day, who feared God and was no brawler? No poetry in the clean, civic life that made duty its goal, and left the clamor about rights to cure itself; that gave peace to our borders for six days of the week and a quiet Sabbath on the seventh? When he went to church and took his wife and children with him, at night knelt down to pray at his fireside with his family around him, and by day was honest and straightforward, as well as shrewd and industrious, was the citizen of New York less poetical than if he had worn a cavalier's sword and made the street a daily battle-field? Was there no poetry in the soul of the smooth-faced youth who went downtown in the early morning and swept out his employer's store, in the fear of God, and even as he did it let his thoughts wander to the unpretentious little house under whose roof he had made his early decorous visit

last night to the maiden of his choice and his hopes? No poetry in the modest damsel, who, prayer-book and handkerchief in hand, walked so demurely to church that only a pink flush of the cheek denoted that she knew whose ringing step was coming near her, and who was none the less lovely that she had never been to public ball and opera, and did not know a dado from a frieze? Then there is none in the trees that grow as the Everlasting Will appoints; in the birds who wing their viewless paths in ordained orbits; in the flowers that blossom sweet and fair in their generation; in the lichens and mosses that cover the decay of nature, and the green leaf put forth in the spring like a dove from the great brown ark of the earth to herald the coming resurrection.

Go to, O Vandal doubter! It is all poetry as I look back. I see the poetry of quiet and unpretentious but happy homes, sheltered under long lines of waving trees, now exterminated; of green fields at Bloomingdale, easily reached in a stroll, and of country villas between Kip's Bay and Harlem River; of farms and rustic bowers that dotted the upper part of the island, and gave pleasant contrast to the dusty streets of the city below; of the wild and rugged scenery of McGowan's Pass and Breakneck Hill; of the mossy sides of old earthworks which shelter now only the daisy and the buttercup, but once encircled the men of the Revolution; of the ancient wooden bridges that led to the serenely rural regions of Westchester County, and that served to recall in precept and example the ancient Kissing Bridge of our Knickerbocker ancestry.

The life of the merchant of that day might seem commonplace and dull, but it was not. If he lacked

the push and hurry of to-day, the æsthetic office, and fashionable business hours, he had his compensations. There was poetry in our lost and forgotten industries. The stately ships that then carried our flag lay at every wharf, and the offices were redolent with spices from the East, and sugars from the Indies and teas from Cathay; and the bluff down-east captains came back with wonderful offerings of coral and shells and birds and fruit for the wives and children of the ships' owners. The visitor to those plain, prosaic places of business found himself swept thousands of miles away by their sights and scents; and when he came to talk with the men who sent out the busy fleets, he found that they knew the story of the ship and exulted in its record. He rejoiced, too, in the swift clippers that glided off the stocks in our ship-yards on the east side and went out upon the ocean to distance the fleets of the world; in the ring and rattle of a thousand hammers in yards that are now deserted and have forgotten the step of the American mechanic; in the rival steamboats that raced up and down the Hudson in the days before the railroads on that river were built, and in the line of rapid but unfortunate steamships that carried our flag from New York to Liverpool and did their best to keep it afloat. But he had other loves, too—his home, his church, his Shakespeare Club, and his whist-party, the hospitable gathering of friends at his home, without display and newspaper publication, his children—whom he brought up to look upon him as their trusted adviser—his cheery picnics at Elysian Fields, and his piscatorial rambles in search of Harlem River flounders—yes, and he was even known to be not ashamed of loving his wife. The invisible poet was

patriotic, too, and when the call came for troops to march to distant Mexico, the dull coat of the man of business flashed out splendid fires of patriotism.

It is for these reasons that I protest against the atrocious sentiment of the Goth. I look back and see the oriole swinging on the swaying branch of the sycamore in the old city streets, and the bluebird flying athwart the white blossoms of the horse-chestnut, and the robin building her nest in the willow; under the green trees of the forgotten old park my little sisters (who began to walk in fields of imperishable green thirty years ago) are playing; and through the quiet streets a plodding school-boy goes with his Virgil under his arm, and with high hopes in his heart; and for that quiet, prosaic life, with its old-time duties and restrictions, its homely joys and patriotic impulses, I, Felix Oldboy, am to-day profoundly grateful. There is no sweeter poetry in existence than its retrospect.

It was this old home-life of New York that culminated so grandly here in the April days of 1861, when the sons of the metropolis shouldered the musket themselves—asking no substitutes and taking no bounty—and in the beauty of the spring-tide sunshine marched down Broadway to the echo of a city's wild huzzas. No cavaliers ever marched more proudly than they. None fought better. In the white splendor of their youth they lay dead on the field of honor, or returned brown, bearded, and victorious. The story of our Theodore Winthrop at Big Bethel was the record of all the boys from our homes who gave their lives for their country.

But I have said enough, perhaps too much, about this poetry business, and I relent. At some future

time, when I have completed my great work on *The Dialects of the Manhado Indians, with Parallel Annotations on the Coincidences of the Iroquois Tongue*, I may print a book upon this theme, to the honor and glory of the city which I love.

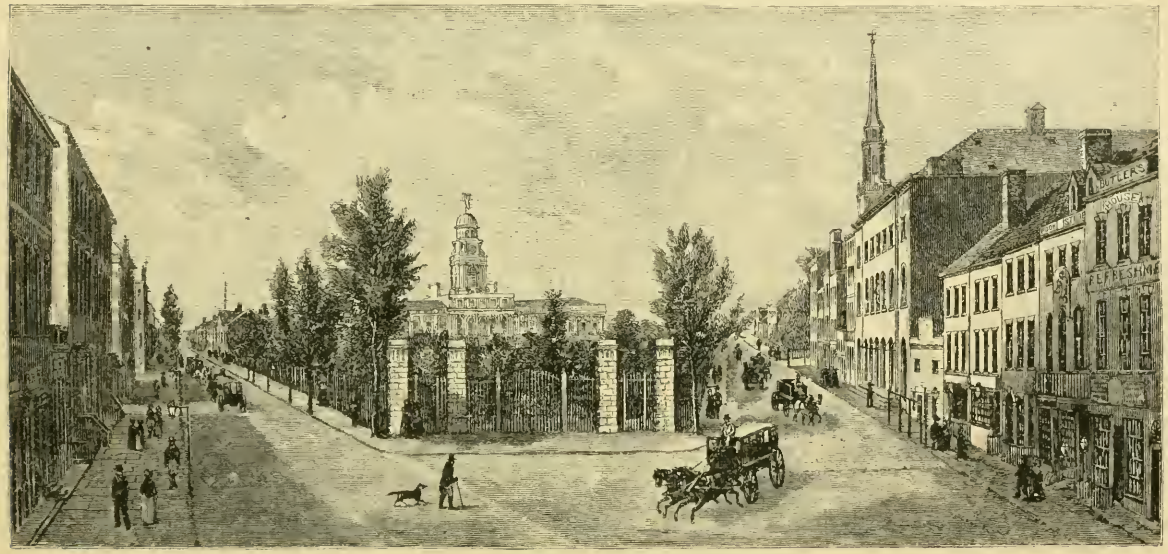
Meanwhile, instead of proceeding at once on our tour up Broadway from Lispenard's Swamp, as I had intended, I may as well digress again and answer the question of a correspondent who wants to know something about my grandmother's home and mine—where it was, what it looked like, and whereof was its atmosphere.

The dear old lady's life was an incarnation of poetry, and once in a while, too, she actually dropped into versification. "Felix," she said to me on one memorable occasion when she had come to pay me a visit at the old college on the Delaware where I first was matriculated—"Felix, I composed some of the most beautiful poetry that you ever heard while I was in the cars on my way here." "Give it to me, granny," I replied, as I put on the critical air of a highly literary Freshman. She liked me to call her "granny" when we were alone, because she knew it was simply affectionate, and there was something kittenish about her to the last. On this occasion she took off her golden spectacles, leaned over confidentially towards me, and said with sorrowful earnestness, "For the life of me, Felix, I can't remember a line of it, and I can't even remember what it was about." She never did recall it. Unfortunately, too, this is the only specimen of my grandmother's poetry.

But, for all that, her life, in its long, patient widowhood, was a poem of wonderful sweetness. We two—

she with her white hair and I with the glow of youth —understood each other perfectly, and our lives harmonized marvellously, and I think it was from her that I caught the affection I feel for some of the inanimate localities of which she taught me the history and traditions. She was of the ancient colonial lineage of New York, and with all her gentleness was a devout believer that blood would tell in men as in horses. A most womanly woman, when fourscore years had begun to bow her form, I was fond of persuading her to let me have a glimpse of the days of her puissant girlhood, just for the sake of seeing the flush of twenty summers creep once more up her cheek, and lighten the eyes that never seemed to grow old. It is well for us all when we can carry something of this poetry of life beyond the fifty years' mile-stone.

My grandmother lived in a three-story and basement brick house that faced St. John's Park. The house had a peaked roof and dormer-windows; in front a brown-stone stoop, with iron railings ending in a lofty extinguisher, whose use departed when link lights went out of date, but whose pattern was still fashionable. In front two large sycamores gave ample shade, and the wide porch in the rear was covered by grapevines, and the yard was shaded by a horse-chestnut tree. The house was severely plain outside; within, it was a model of comfort for that time, though latter-day luxury would think it stiff and uncomfortable. The lofty walls of the large parlors were painted a light drab. There were chandeliers of cut glass, for candles, hung from the centre of each ceiling, and similar clusters of glass pendants adorned the mantel-piece, which was further set out with massive silver candle-



CITY HALL PARK, 1822

sticks and huge rare shells. Rich carpets of a large pattern were on the floor; the furniture was of satin-wood and ebony of severe pattern in the front parlor, and of horse-hair, still more severe, in the back. Old-fashioned tête-à-têtes were the only sign of yielding to the weakness of the human frame in young couples, while immense rocking-chairs and small and hard ottomans gave what comfort they could to the old and the young. Heavy curtains hung at the deep windows, which also contained antique courting appliances, in the shape of cushioned seats that filled the window space, and that were cosey enough love-nooks when the curtains were let down and used as a shield. Pictures and books were there in profusion, and a cabinet collection of shells that my father had brought back with him from the Indies. Bric-à-brac was unknown and portières were not dreamed of—heavy solid mahogany doors everywhere—but we had huge vases that had come direct from China, and rugs that a ship captain had brought from the Mediterranean. So we were not entirely barbarous.

It might puzzle the later generation to understand how we kept warm all winter, with nothing but grate fires of Liverpool coal to heat the parlors, but somehow we managed to exist. Nor was there any gas in the house. Astral lamps and candles did service down-stairs, and we took our candlesticks or small camphene lamps to light us up to bed. In the sleeping-rooms we had stoves of sheet-iron, in which wood-fires were lighted at night or in the morning "to take the chill off." Up-stairs were great closets between the large sleeping-rooms, that were storehouses in themselves, and above was an attic with sloping walls, containing

chests, and boxes, and barrels of miscellaneous plunder, out of which I surreptitiously unearthed *Peregrine Pickle* and other morsels of forbidden literature—with infinite delight, as I remember. My own room was under the eaves, and when I was a boy I delighted to climb out of the dormer-window and up the steep roof at risk of my neck until I reached the ridge, where I would sit astride and watch the swaying of the trees in the park and the circling flight of thrush and robin. Down-stairs was the basement room, in which we dined, whose windows contained semi-transparent panes of glass imported from Paris, which it was almost a death penalty to break. Under the front porch was a hydrant of Croton water, and all that was used had to be carried from this point through the house—for we had not yet reached the luxury of Croton on every floor. The water for the kitchen range and boiler was brought from two cisterns built under the flagging of the rear yard and filtered through charcoal; and in the yard was also a deep, unused well, which I delighted to sound with a plummet. Here were also my treasures—a dog, parrot, doves, guinea-pigs, and a turtle.

There was nothing of gilt or gingerbread here, and some ordinary comforts of to-day were missing, but for all that, we had a good time of it. There was no lounging at the feet of beauty, no æsthetic sprawling in the drawing-room; no liveried footman or buttoned page, where my grandmother's colored man, Abraham, son of an old slave of the family, did the honors of attendance. But somehow there was a prevailing sense of dignity which I failed to find in the "palatial mansion" of Mr. Nabob. The stately manners of my grandmother's home were a study. There comes up

as I write the picture of Dr. Wainwright, the model of clerical elegance in his day, taking his glass of Madeira in a way which was positively sublime to witness, and I really do not know where to turn to have the picture duplicated in life. When some one expressed surprise, in the days before the war, to see Bishop Doane of New Jersey take off his hat in the streets to Benny Jackson, a colored pastor and preacher at Burlington, where they both lived, that distinguished prelate remarked that he could not submit to being outdone in politeness by a negro. I heard the bishop once deliver a commencement address to the students of Burlington College, founded upon the motto of William of Wykeham, "Manners Makyth Man." That was thirty years ago, and it might not be a bad idea to have another sermon preached from the same text for the benefit of a new generation.

Poetry? But I must not digress again. As the strident voice of the Goth who has stirred me up to righteous wrath dies away, and his aggressive form passes out of sight, I seem to hear my grandmother say, with just a suspicion of sarcastic emphasis in her voice, "Felix, tea is ready, and you should have invited the gentleman in. A cup of tea is very good to take the wind off the stomach."

CHAPTER VIII

ECCLESIASTICAL RAIDS BY NIGHT — BOWERY VILLAGE METHODISTS — CHARLOTTE TEMPLE'S HOME — A BOOK-STORE OF LANG SYNE — OLD LAFAYETTE PLACE — THE TRAGEDY OF CHARLOTTE CANDA — A REMINDER OF TWEED

My grandmother was a devout attendant upon the services of St. John's Chapel, in Varick Street. I can see her now, in coal-scuttle bonnet and ample Hudson's Bay sables, leaning one arm upon the high top of our pew, while she delivered the responses in as firm a voice as if she were an ecclesiastical adjutant with a copy of general orders from celestial headquarters. Her prayer-book was an octavo of formidable dimensions, for which I had a sincere and somewhat awful respect in my very young days; for, when it was brought out from the bureau drawer, I knew that it meant the recording of more sermons in my youthful calendar. Twice a day to church and twice a day to Sunday-school was the rule of the house, and it was inflexible. Everybody went to church in those days, and we all knew each other and duly catalogued the absentees and inquired of their families after service as to their welfare. Immediately in front of my grandmother sat Dr. Hunter and his family, behind us Lispenard Stewart; to the right sat Gen. John A. Dix and his household: to the left, across the north aisle, was the great square pew, upholstered in drab, in which the Lydig family sat. I remember it particularly, be-

cause of the fact that it appeared to offer unlimited scope to the limbs of a naturally fidgety boy.

Once in a while my grandmother would delight me by stealing away by night to a Methodist or Presbyterian conventicle. Usually she despised heretics and schismatics—at least, she said that she did, and tried to believe it. But the sermons at St. John's were invariably high and dry—delivered high up in the old-fashioned, three-decker pulpit, and as dry as the ink on the manuscript—and I think the dear old lady felt the need occasionally of what some of her ancient heretical cronies of other churches called "an awakening discourse." So I was always glad when she put on her bonnet of a Sunday evening and locked up the drawer that contained her formidable prayer-book, and said, "Come, Felix"—for then I prepared for an awakener. We always got it at the Vestry Street Methodist Church. No; you won't find it on the map now. The church at present occupies a handsome brownstone building on Seventh Avenue, near Fourteenth Street. Then it had a shabby, old brick structure for its ecclesiastical home, but its membership numbered nearly a thousand, and its congregation overflowed the aisles and vestibules. I do not remember the names of any preachers I heard there, but they were earnest and energetic men, who had no manuscripts before them, and who sometimes startled me by their plain talk about a brimstone region which I was accustomed to hear very delicately alluded to in the pulpit. Some of the old hymns that I heard there linger still in my memory. There was no poetry in them, but somehow they had power to sway humanity in masses more than any modern anthem. Some-

times my grandmother would hear me singing at home,

"It's the old-time religion,
And it's good enough for me;"

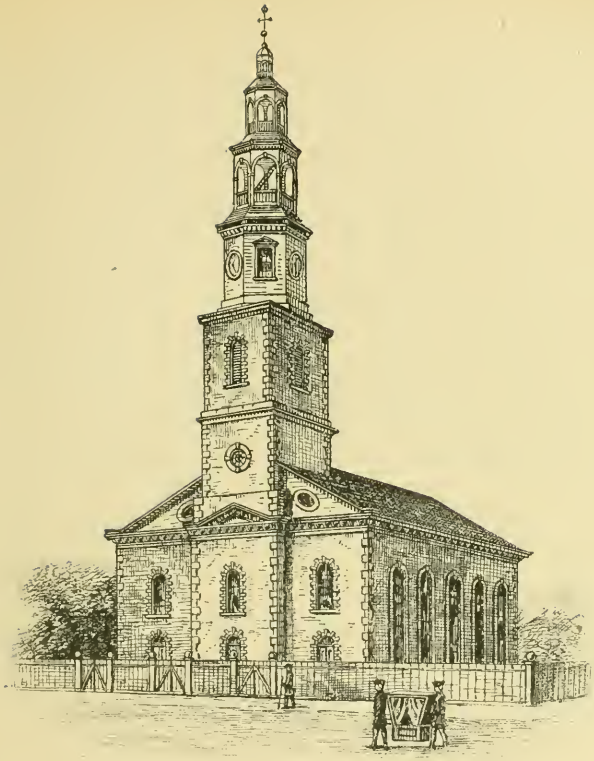
or shouting explosively in the back yard,

"I am climbing Jacob's ladder;"

and if she saw me at the time she would turn and look at me reproachfully, but she never said anything.

Occasionally my grandmother compromised with her conscience by going to hear an eloquent young Virginian who occupied the pulpit of Laight Street congregation, and delighted a most fashionable audience. She would quietly remark to me on the way that he was really more than half a churchman, because he wore gown, bands, and cassock when he preached, and used the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in the opening service. The diagnosis made by my grandmother was correct. This young clergyman, the Rev. Flavel S. Mines, was afterwards ordained deacon and priest in old St. George's Church, in Beekman Street, where he became assistant to the Rev. Dr. Milnor. Some time ago I received a letter from Benson J. Lossing, asking me if I could tell him what had been the young assistant's fate. He wrote: "I think he was the most eloquent man I ever heard in the pulpit. I suppose he must have passed to his rest long ago." Yes; for thirty-four years he has been sleeping under the altar of Trinity Church, San Francisco, which he founded.

Now, what has caused this diversion from our tour up Broadway, from the Lispenard Meadows? *Imprimis*, it was the recollection that I had forgotten to



ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BEEKMAN STREET

mention the famous book-store of Roe Lockwood, on Broadway, below Lispenard Street, where all the boys of forty years ago went to purchase their school-books. Can I ever forget with what awe I looked up at the shelves filled with tomes of tremendous learning, or with what pride I went there alone, at the age of eleven, and purchased a Cooper's Virgil? It was carefully wrapped up in paper, but as soon as I got outside I tore the paper off, placed the book nonchalantly un-

der my arm, and walked with head erect down to my home on the Park—the proudest boy in the city on that day. Looking back, I know it must have been a queer sight that I presented as I trudged along to school with my big books under my arm, and I don't wonder that the larger boys in Billy Forrest's school stopped me sometimes to see if I could really read the direful woes of Æneas and Dido. Small for my years, I wore roundabout and trousers, a cap with a visor, and a brown linen apron with sleeves, tied behind and reaching to my knees. This last was my grandmother's idea of a school uniform for small boys. A woollen tippet around my neck and a pair of mittens knit by home hands completed my winter equipment. Why, I can smile myself as I see this queer little figure trudging through the snow at the junction of Varick and Franklin streets, and far too chilled to cast more than an oblique glance at his favorite antiquity—the much admired and lamented statue of William Pitt, which stood, wrecked and dismantled, outside Mr. Riley's Fifth Ward Museum Hotel. But here I am digressing again. Mr. Roe Lockwood was an elder in the Laight Street Presbyterian Church, as well as a shrewd man of business, and this fact it is that has led me astray in my tour.

Another reason for the digression is my chancing in upon a quiet celebration in a forgotten neighborhood a Sunday or two ago, which brought back to me some vivid memories of my visits to the Vestry Street sanctuary. This was the centennial anniversary of the old Bowery Village Methodist Church, known now as the Seventh Street Church, which began very humbly in the parlor of Gilbert Coutant's little frame house, near

the two-miles stone on the Bowery. From the modest parlor that was carefully sanded every Saturday night in preparation for the morrow, the church was moved to a site on the ground now occupied by the Cooper Institute, and here young and zealous Peter Cooper became the first superintendent of its Sunday-school. It was moved successively to Nicholas William Street, once parallel with Stuyvesant Street, but now blotted out, and then to its present situation. I heard John Stephenson, who has built street-cars for nearly every civilized country, tell the story of his conversion in the old church fifty-nine years ago, and he and others praised the work of old "Father" Tiemann (father of the Mayor of that name), and told the story of the church in the days when it was in the prime of its strength—the days when I was a boy on the west side, and Seventh Street was up-town, and the centre of the homes of prosperous tradesmen and wealthy descendants of the old colonial settlers, who had their bouweries and villas on the other side of the Sand Hills. The neighborhood about St. Mark's Church was known as Bowery Village for the first quarter of the present century, and even later.

On an old map of this neighborhood I find the continuation of Stuyvesant Street beyond the Bowery (now Fourth Avenue) set down as Art Street, and I wonder if this was identical with Astor Place as indicated by some later maps. Upon Art Street, a little east of the Bowery, stood the stone house which was once the residence of Charlotte Temple. Her story seems to have made an impression which ambitious and gifted men have failed to create. Her grave in Trinity church-yard excites more interest than those of

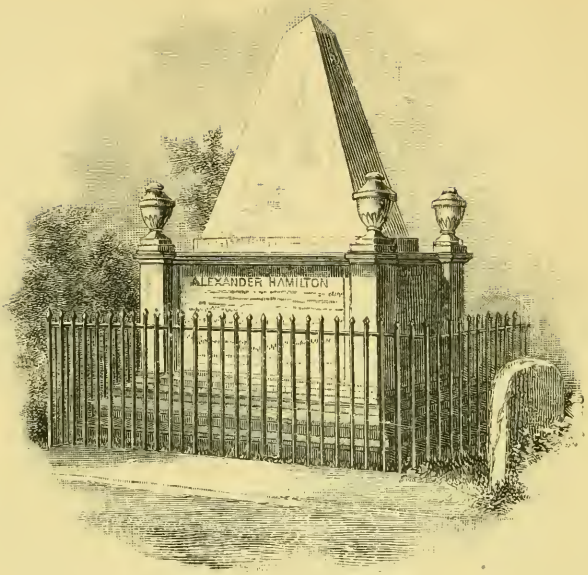
Alexander Hamilton or gallant Captain Lawrence, of the *Chesapeake*. The other day, as I was passing the entrance of that church-yard, a quiet-voiced young man, on whose arm a shy and pretty bride was leaning, asked me if I could point out the grave of Charlotte Temple, and they informed me confidentially that they were on a tour from Philadelphia. As if a gray mus-

GRAVE OF CHARLOTTE TEMPLE

tache like Felix Oldboy could not tell at a glance that the two blushing innocents were taking their first week's journey in life together, all daisies and whipped syllabub and sunshine, to which gold and diamonds were but dross. A few moments afterwards I passed and saw them forming part of a group

that were gazing sadly at the slab sunk in the turf that told of a short life sadly ended, and, if I mistake not, there was a tear hanging to the eyelids of the gentle bride.

Not far from this neighborhood was another historic church, which is fated to go the way of its predecessors of the same creed in the down-town districts. The old Reformed Dutch Church, which has so long been a landmark in Lafayette Place, at Fourth Street, is now razed to the ground. It has been somewhat lonesome since the departure of St. Bartholomew's Church, on the opposite side, and a block below, and has found its continued existence a burden. The young do not mind the moving, but rather enjoy it; but to us older ones the razing of a church hallowed by associations with the past is a sore blow. I find that we don't like to turn down the streets in which an old association of our youth has been slain. We go out of our way to avoid it. True, the people we have known have moved away, but they cannot carry with them the familiar look of their homes and haunts. For some years past only the Willetts, out of all the old stock, have remained to keep up the ancient connection of Lafayette Place with the old-time settlers. The new race do not even remember when Madame Canda kept her famous school for young ladies next door to the Dutch Church—a very rose-bud garden of girlish loveliness—and have only dimly heard the tradition of a winter's night tragedy that shocked a whole city by its startling suddenness and left the Canda household bereaved. The fair young girl who on her eighteenth birthnight was dashed from her carriage and killed, and at the moment she was to make her



GRAVE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON

triumphant entrance into society entered into life eternal, had a whole city for her mourners.

While upon the subject of churches, I recall a picture of desolation that I witnessed on one of the streets east of Broadway, soon after the close of the war—an old-fashioned church, with stucco walls, whose roof and windows had been dismantled, standing in the midst of trees that had been felled and vaults that had been rifled of their mouldering coffins. It was the old home of St. Stephen's congregation, who had moved up-town into a more fashionable neighborhood. The old rector, Dr. Price, still lives, though approaching ninety years of age. But the ruined church had

a special interest for me at the time as the place where William M. Tweed attended public worship, or at least had his family pew. It did not strike me then as prophetic, but I seldom think of that fallen man, who gave his occupation as "statesman" when enrolled as a convict at Blackwell's Island, without that picture of utter desolation in the dismantled churchyard that had often echoed to his steps, coming up to my mind. Before me lies, by chance, a list of the wedding presents made to his daughter. It is a queer record. There are names here which are still potent in local politics, chiefly of Mr. Tweed's own political following, but among them are sandwiched the names of Jay Gould, Thurlow Weed, James Fisk, Jr., Isaac Bell, Hugh J. Hastings, and other gentlemen of apparently opposite views, and the value of the presents mounts up to a small fortune.

As I trudge back to Broadway and prepare to take up again my line of march from the vicinity of Canal Street, near by the spot where a lovely lane once ran from the Bayard mansion, a little to the east of this thoroughfare, down through Lispenard Meadows to the North River shore, I am composing mentally a sermon upon shade trees. An old school-teacher of mine once vowed in his wrath—apropos of an adolescent elm-tree that had been hacked to death by the knives of his pupils—that "the boy who would kill a shade tree would kill a man," and I do not know but that in the main he was correct. My uncle has told me that when he was a boy, Broadway and all the adjacent streets were lined with trees of every native species. It is curious to read that in the time when Broadway, from the arched bridge (Canal Street) to

its junction with the Bowery Lane (at Union Square) was known as the Middle Road, Mr. Samuel Burling offered to furnish poplar-trees to line the thoroughfare from Leonard Street to Art Street, and that there was poetry enough in the Common Council to agree that the arrangement would be "an additional beauty to Broadway, the pride of our city!" I try to fancy it all as we stand here—the modest dwellings close at hand, which were the homes of the Pells, the Griswolds, the Hoffmans, the Lawrences, the Ludlows, Citizen Genet, and Dr. Livingston, and the stately poplars that stood sentinel in front of them; the circus that fronted unobtrusively on the main street and hid itself in the fields beyond; the public-house at Broadway and Grand Street, with Tattersall's below it. But I cannot make it real. My uncle has told me that the open ditch or stream at Canal Street was eight or ten feet wide, and that its banks were lined with beautiful wild flowers, and that upon the hills in the rear of Broadway and below Spring Street the boys of his day used to play in the remains of the Revolutionary earthworks. I recall hereabouts the old Olympic Theatre, the American Art Union (whose annual drawings of pictures made one of the milder sensations of the day), the Manhattan Club, and Tattersall's.

Tattersall's, on the east side of Broadway, between Howard and Grand streets, was one of the best known institutions of the old city. Here one could buy any sort of a horse or carriage at an hour's notice, and its auctions were as amusing as a circus. Perhaps my own memory of it is faint, but it had been freshened up by my uncle. In youth a centaur, he used to

spend all his spare time around Tattersall's stables, and more than once his mother had been properly shocked at seeing him flying down the street on the bare back of a horse which he had been permitted to take out for exercise or to ride to water at the Arched Bridge. A reckless boy, he rode like the wind, and kept up his pace through life, but he always loved the mother who adored this most daring of her offspring.

When in a reminiscent train of thought on this line, my grandmother said, solemnly, "Felix, if I had that boy's neck broken once, I had it broken a hundred times, and then to think he died quietly in his bed, after all!" If I had not known my grandmother infinitely well, I might have thought that she had been actually disappointed at her favorite son's edifying end. But I took up her great cat, Gustavus Adolphus, a famous fellow of the tiger pattern, who was never far away from the gentle old lady's little feet (which had moved daintily in the minuet in the old Clinton Mansion on the Hudson River, close by Greenwich Village, and had wrought immense havoc among the high-collared and voluminously-cravated exquisites of the period), and placed him in her lap. And as she stroked his fur a tear fell on the ferocious whiskers of the namesake of Sweden's hero, and he looked up and plaintively purred as if he, too, had understood it all.

CHAPTER IX

ECCENTRICITIES OF MEMORY—QUEER STREET CHARACTERS—THE ONLY SON OF A KING—IDIOMS OF A PAST GENERATION—OLD VOLUNTEER FIREMEN—A FORGOTTEN STATESMAN

A QUEER thing is this memory of ours. When we have leisure to overhaul its storehouses, to brush away the dust and restore the forgotten pictures of long ago, it creates a new world of old friends for us veterans who persist in lagging behind the majority. With an implacable enemy sowing white hairs and deep wrinkles, I understand what my grandmother meant when she told me that she was never lonesome; that all the sweet visions and hallowed spectres of the past came trooping around her as she sat by the fireside in the winter nights, and they made her wondrously content. The babies she had kissed in death half a century before, and that had never grown an hour older; the stalwart young brother who went to sea in her girlhood, and never was heard of again; the husband taken from her side in early manhood; the endless line of friends who for two generations had been passing over Jordan into the land of promise; her bridesmaids, the children she had played with, her own pretty young mother—all these came trooping around the white-haired old lady and made her happy in her loneliest hours. Surely one of the beatitudes was omitted in making up the transcript, for, blessed are the aged who understand how to grow old gracefully.

A. M. C. Smith. James S. Leggett. Zophar Mills. James Gulick. Charles King. Jacob Hays.
Nath'l Finch 13 Engine. James Watson Webb. John Hillyer, Sheriff. Thomas Downing.
Matthew Bird. Cornelius W. Lawrence, Mayor. E. Windust.

"Did you ever hear me preach?" asked the elder Coleridge of Charles Lamb. "I never heard you do anything else," was the sharp response. Perhaps some of my readers will think my grandmother was right in desiring to train me up for a minister, and that there is a surplus of moralizing in these papers. The dear old lady was so bent upon my making a career of the pulpit that she objected to my taking dancing lessons at Monsieur Charraud's Terpsichorean rookery on White Street. Do any of the old boys remember that musty old resort—the dingy nests of boxes in which hats and shoes were deposited, the well-waxed floor lighted by candles in sconces, the dear old dancing-master and his endless violin, and goblin wrath with a pupil's awkwardness, the giggling of the girls who carried on surreptitious flirtations through offerings of taffy and peanuts, the wild delight of escorting a chosen sweetheart home, and the sorrow of having to leave her at the nearest corner to her home, for fear her big sisters would make her life miserable by teasing? I do not think that this mild revelry would have harmed even a student of divinity, much less a boy who had no such aspirations.

These things are all written down in the book of memory, and it is the privilege of age to open the volume and preach a sermon therefrom. Besides, I am tempted into it. One friend writes and asks if I remember the queer personages who used to roam our streets when the city was smaller and identities were not so easily hidden. Another wants information in regard to the idioms, and the political caricatures, and the eccentricities of private and public life forty years ago—and then I open the volume of memory's photo-

graphs (though we had nothing but daguerrotypes then, and Insley had the most famous gallery of the day), and perforce I begin to preach.

Yes, there were some characters in the streets of New York whom everybody knew by sight, but of the mysteries of whose life as little was known then as now. The Lime-kiln Man was a familiar figure to the street arabs and a sphinx to the newspaper men. Sturdy, with long beard, and large blue eyes, having an appearance of education and of former refinement, he had deliberately chosen to make himself an outcast. It was said that he slept in the lime-kilns that then existed in the neighborhood of Gansevoort Street, and his shabby clothes, and even his long beard, at times bore witness to the whiteness of his rough-and-ready bedding. He neither sought nor shunned human society, and was fond of a stroll down Broadway. To us boys he was a fascinating terror; and while we watched him with intense interest, we would have run away had he approached us. Tramps were a rarity in that day, and the Lime-kiln Man was a hero in our eyes, though he was made a Mumbo Jumbo in the nursery, and all sorts of stories were prevalent as to the crimes he might have committed, of which he was doubtless entirely innocent. He made a picturesque figure in the little city of quiet workers, and when he died he received a longer obituary than many a good citizen who had never gone crazy with love or losses. The Blue Man was another character who was always pointed out to strangers as a local celebrity. There was nothing odd about him, except that he had taken so much medicine that his face had assumed a livid hue. Its deep indigo color made him appear a ghost

among the living, and I well remember how I was startled when he was first pointed out to me on Broadway. At two different times there were demented men who haunted the City Hall Park and attempted to set up in business as the Angel Gabriel. One of these preachers of a judgment to come carried a trumpet under his arm as a badge of office; the other wore a sort of uniform, with a star upon his breast. Sometimes they would preach to a few auditors in the Park, or at the street corners, and nobody molested them. Indeed, one of this eccentric pair showed considerable method in his madness, and managed to convince some persons possessed of a little money that his claims were divine. He went to the penitentiary. The other Angel Gabriel brought up in a lunatic asylum. Another man of mark had the proud distinction of never wearing an overcoat. He wore a full-dress suit of black (the dress-coat was commonly worn on the streets then), and in the severest winter weather, though he had reached the age of seventy, he buttoned his coat up to the chin, and with no additional protection save a pair of warm gloves, he defied the elements. This gentleman, who was an officer of a leading church association, was our Hannibal Hamlin in civil life. But he was not admired by the boys—for he was continually held up to them as an example of what they ought to do to harden their constitutions and keep down tailors' bills.

Of all the strange characters whom I saw or met in early years, the one who interested me most was the Rev. Eleazer Williams, missionary to the St. Regis Indians, in the northern part of the State. He was not a claimant, and yet he believed himself to be the

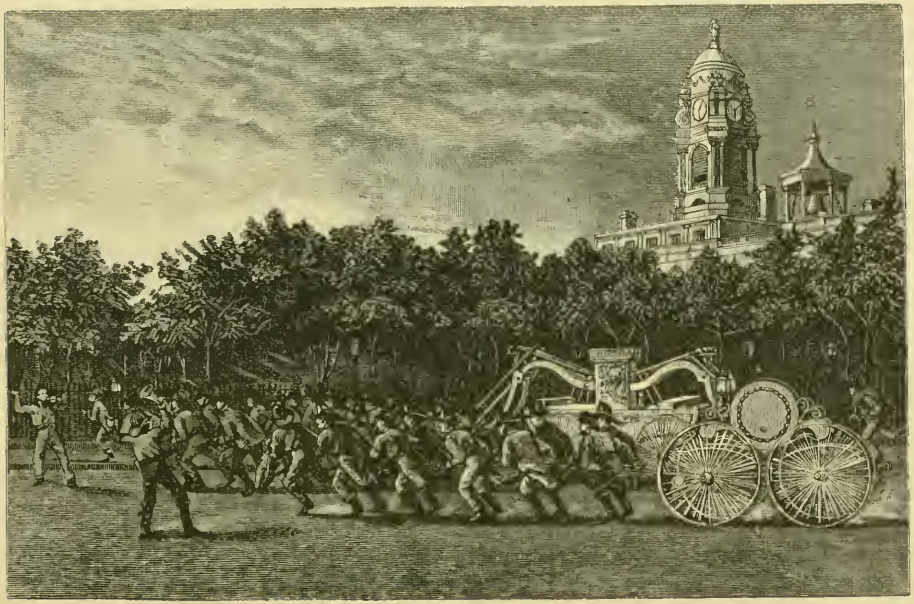
son of Louis XVI. of France. As I saw him in the chancel of St. John's Chapel, in his surplice, with a black velvet cap on his head, he looked all that he claimed to be; as he wrote his autograph for me afterwards, he looked "every inch a king." I had hoped he would write his royal autograph. "No, my son," he replied, "I am only a missionary now, though a king's son." He had no doubts as to his royal birth; I have never had any concerning him. Prince de Joinville and other dignitaries of the French kingdom had gone to him to get him to sign off claims that he had never made, and he refused. He would not sell his birthright, and he did not want to wear a crown. That was kingliness. Mr. Williams was present at a reception at Dr. Wainwright's residence in Hubert Street, and a young student of divinity who had never heard of him had been looking at some rare portraits of the royal family of France which happened to be on the walls. Suddenly he turned to a fellow-student and said, "See, one of those old Bourbons has stepped out of his frame and is walking around here." The living portrait was a perfect fac-simile. Both young men were greatly astonished when, later in the evening, they learned the strange story of the kingly guest. For a brief while Mr. Williams was lionized in New York, and was made the subject of a wide-spread inquiry, "Have we a Bourbon among us?" He returned quietly to his work, and died a few years afterwards among the people to whom he had given his life. That the son of a king of France should become a Protestant missionary in the American Republic is a flight beyond the ordinary ether of fiction. Yet he believed it, and so do I.

Idioms? Yes, slang is of no nation or period. It was a characteristic of a past generation, as it is to-day, though I am quite certain that neither the clergy in their pulpits nor the ladies in their homes indulged in it. Queerly enough, one can trace the story of any given period in its idioms, or, if you please, in its slang. The idioms stand for living people, real scenes, and actual life. Twelve or fifteen years before the war for the Union broke out, a New York boy of good family ran away to sea and made a whaling voyage. Out in the South Pacific Ocean one day his ship anchored off a small island, little more than a coral reef in the wide waste of waters, in the hope of getting fresh supplies. Presently a great canoe, paddled by a score of dusky spearmen, shot out from the shore, and a huge islander, who turned out to be the king of the reef, clambered up the side of the ship. When he reached the deck the monarch smiled so as to show every one of his milk-white teeth, and laughed assuringly. "Do you speak English?" asked the captain. The giant opened his capacious mouth and roared out, "I kills for Keyser!" The mystified captain, who was a New Englander, inquired "what in the name of iniquity" he meant. "I kills for Keyser!" roared the giant again. And then the young New Yorker stepped forward and explained that this was a New York idiom —not to say a bit of slang—in general use at one time in the Bowery. Keyser was a famous cattle man, and the butchers who "killed" for him were proud of asserting the fact, and it had passed into the slang of the period. A shipwrecked sailor or some delayed ship had taught the King this one sentence in English, and he was as proud of it as if he had acquired the

whole language. To him it meant a royal salutation, and he followed it up with royal gifts to the ship. But to the New Yorker who heard it there, five thousand miles from home, it came like a cry of mockery from the grave.

Was it the fireman in real life or the fire laddie of the stage who gave rise to the slang that centred around the life of the volunteer fireman? For a long time, in my school-days, "Mose," "Lize," and "Syksey" were familiar names upon our play-grounds, and we shouted to "wash her out" or "take de butt" as if we were veritable Chanfraus. The caricatures of the period found inexhaustible fun in "Mose," with his red shirt, black broadcloth pantaloons tucked into his boot-tops, his elfin "soap-locks" hanging over each ear and down his close-shaven cheeks, his tall silk hat perched on one side of his head, and his broadcloth coat hung over his left arm. For his "Lize" he ordered pork and beans in the restaurant, and bade the waiter, "Don't yer stop ter count a bean," and to "Lize" he remarked, as he drove out on the road, "It isn't a graveyard we're passin'; it's mile-stones." Possibly a new generation does not see anything laughable in these traditional jokes, but to the men of that period they stood for living actualities, the dashing heroes of many a fierce battle with the dread forces of fire.

I honor the old volunteer firemen. When one of the battered "machines" of former days passes by in a public procession I feel like taking off my hat to it, as I always do to the tattered colors that I have followed on many a fierce field of fight. Ah, what nights of noise and struggle were those in which the



"THE RACE"

[After a lithograph published by Currier & Ives, 1854]

engines rattled down pavement or sidewalk, drawn by scores of willing hands and ushered into action by the hoarse cries of hundreds of cheering voices. There was no boy's play around the engine when once it began to battle with the flames. Men left their pleasant firesides to risk their lives for the preservation of the lives and property of others, and they did it without bravado, as if it were but one of the ordinary duties of their lot. They had their jealousies and their prejudices, their feuds and their fights of rival organizations, but all met alike on the common ground of self-sacrifice for the common good. All classes of society were represented in the ranks of the firemen. The mechanic and the son of the wealthy merchant were indistinguishable under the volunteer's heavy hat, and emulated each other in labors and daring. College graduates drew the silver-mounted carriage of Amity Hose to the scene of peril, and then the boys of "Old Columbia" did as good work amid the flames as the gilt-edged boys of the Seventh Regiment did afterwards through the long years of war. And then the firemen's processions—were they not superb? What a magnificent polish the engines took, and how exuberantly they were garlanded with flowers, and how full were the long lines of red-shirted laddies who manned the ropes and were the cynosure of the admiring eyes of all feminine Gotham! The men who carried the trumpets were the conquering heroes of the day and the envy of every boyish beholder. It seems a pity that their glory should have departed. Has it departed? I open the book of memory again, and they are all there, and the glory of their record is undimmed:

"Those ahold of fire-engines and hook-and-ladder ropes
No less to me than the gods of the antique wars."

Speaking of the caricatures of that day, I am reminded that the first political caricature which I remember to have seen was entitled "The Fox of Kinderhook." It was a large lithograph of a fox curled up at the entrance of his den in the rocks, and in place of his head was substituted the shrewd, sagacious face of Martin Van Buren. At that time, though John Tyler was President, Mr. Van Buren was still a political power, not merely in the State of New York, but in the country at large. Yet to-day he is nothing more than a memory. Senator of the United States, Minister at the Court of St. James's, Secretary of State, and finally President of the United States, his was a most illustrious record, yet how many are able to recall the story of his statesmanship? *Stat nominis umbra.* We speak without thought when we say of this or that man who has managed to achieve distinction that his name and achievements will never be forgotten. A caricature is as apt to fix fame as a library of biographies.

But the fire has almost gone out, the chair on the other side of my old-fashioned grate in which my grandmother used to sit is empty, the familiar spirits of the past have vanished in anticipation of cock-crowing, and I very much fear that some gentle Charles Lamb of the present generation will whisper in my ear: "I never heard you do anything else but preach."

CHAPTER X

CHRISTMAS IN THE OLDER DAYS—A FLIRTATION UNDER THE MISTLETOE—SIXPENNY SLEIGH-RIDES—LITERATURE OF OUR BOYHOOD—SANTA CLAUS IN OUR GRANDMOTHERS' HOMES—DECORATING THE CHURCHES

THERE is one modern improvement which would have delighted my grandmother's heart—the more general observance of Christmas Day. Forty years ago the Episcopalians were the only religious body that decorated and opened their churches on that day, and made it, as it should be, the one day of all the year sacredly set apart for home and the little ones. The Roman Catholics confined their celebration to an early mass, and the members of Protestant denominations in many cases held it to be safer to make their presents on New-year's Day, and thus to avoid even the appearance of a ritualistic tendency. This was a fading relic of ancient Puritanism, but was still so marked that certain of my adult friends would think it necessary to remark that they "did not believe in Christmas," when putting a gift into my little hands on the first day of the year. Somehow it gave me a chill, then, to hear this formal declaration of independence of the tenderest episode in humanity's story. I am glad to see our whole busy city gathering at the cradle of the Babe of Bethlehem, and in spite of its creed of indifferentism, paying homage to the divine spirit of the time. In the Christmas atmosphere of

our streets and homes, the Christmas bustle of our shops and markets, the Christmas sunshine in all faces, the Christmas neighborliness of all hearts, and the Christmas services and sermons in all churches, I see signs of a recognition of humanity's oneness of feelings and aims such as are vouchsafed through no other channel.

"And he took a little child and set it in the midst of them." There comes back to me now the memory of a Christmas season passed in the military prison of the Confederates in Richmond. An officer of the Confederate guard came into the room where the Federal officers were quartered, bringing his little girl, a child of three or four years of age, with him. The sunny-haired babe was a revelation to us. Thought flashed back to desolate homes in the North, and firesides that waited in vain for us. There was not a dry eye in the room, I think, and yet those ragged, unkempt men had nothing but smiles for the little one, and crowded around her with gifts of trinkets they had carved during their long hours of leisure. The babe did not know that she was a preacher, and her congregation did not realize, then at least, the fulfilment of a prophecy that a little child should lead them. Set in the midst of them, she did lead them a step nearer heaven. "Yes," said my grandmother, when I told her of this, and the tears were flowing freely as she tried to fix a grim smile upon her gentle face—"yes, Felix, and I suppose you stood there and stared, too, and made a gumpey of yourself." Precisely what kind of animal or apparition a "gumpey" was I have never been able to determine, but it was rather a favorite synonyme with our

elders for something horrible and awkward in the extreme.

Let us have no mistakes to start with. We children had a good time on Christmas Day. That was our contract, and we carried it out. Let me look back as far as I can, and see how a school-boy prospered at the hands of St. Nicholas. And right here let me say that even as late as the year of which I speak, some of the stanch old Dutch families celebrated the feast of St. Nicholas on his natal day and gave their Santa-Claus gifts nearly three weeks before Christmas—even at the last yielding reluctantly to the English innovation that transferred the traditions of the old city's patron saint to the holiday which England's Church most honored.

A light snow was falling when I ran out of our house in St. John's Park, upon Christmas Eve, on my way to an early celebration of the holiday at Mr. Greenough's school in Franklin Street. The sedate New England pedagogue was a rigid Presbyterian, but it was understood that he relaxed for this once on account of his Episcopalian scholars. We had recitations and dialogues, followed by lemonade and cake, and were home before nine o'clock. Master Felix Oldboy distinguished himself on this occasion by reciting "The Night Before Christmas," which at that time was newly written. I remember nothing more vividly than my lonesome walk home on this Christmas Eve. It was only nine o'clock, but nobody was abroad. I crept through the drifting snow, past the old French Church on Franklin Street, past the great Dutch Church, past the tall flag-staff at Franklin Street and West Broadway—ah, what a long way it

seemed then to my little feet, and how short a distance now!—and up through Varick, by quiet houses that showed glimpses of light within, but whose blinds were decorously closed. It seemed to me, I remember, as if everybody had gone to bed, until I came to the Park, and there, through the long, thin swirls of snow, through the swaying, feathered crests of the trees, I saw the flashes of light from many a window, showing that our near neighbors at any rate were oblivious of all ancient edicts against the royal claims of mince-pie, egg-nogg, and Santa Claus.

At our house we always made much of Christmas Eve. When I had entered and removed my cap and woollen comforter (the boy of that day never wore an overcoat), I found the parlors radiant with festoons of evergreens and innumerable candles, and filled with visitors. To my horror, I was almost immediately stood up before them and made to recite my "piece" —for there was then no Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or to their audiences. But there was fun enough afterwards to make up for this—two long hours of wild dissipation followed. The elder people played whist (and they did it savagely, too, at intervals), and we children had our games of "pillows and keys," "stage-coach," and "going to Jerusalem," with plenty of forfeits and exquisite schemes for their redemption. The big people had cake and punch between whiles; we juniors had cake and mild egg-nogg. Shall I ever forget that night? It was then that for the first time I discovered that I was the possessor of a heart, only to find that I had made it over indissolubly to a lovely being of seven summers, who wore pigtails and pantalets, and whose father got awfully

cross over whist, and lived in Pike Street. Indeed, she was bewitching, and a most arrant little flirt withal. It was at her knees I threw the pillow every time it came to me, and I kissed her in a mad whirl of delight, while she would coolly cross over to a squint-eyed rival of mine and smile sweetly as he bent down to kiss her. But I had the advantage of knowing the locality. So I led her artfully away, and in the back entry I had the satisfaction of exchanging with her a vow of eternal fidelity. The other children shouted at us in chorus, but we did not mind it. We were prepared for persecution. It was all that I could do to tear myself away from her at last. Her father must have guessed my anguish, for he roared out to me at the door: "Kiss her, Felix, my boy; kiss Anna for her Christmas." Blushing, I obeyed. The tender Anna pressed a moist and sticky sugar-plum into my hand at parting. I kept it for a whole week in my pocket. It was black when my grandmother, on a weekly voyage of investigation of my pockets, found it and threw it away.

Do you suppose these people walked home through the storm? Not a bit of it. One of the old stage sleighs, with four horses, was provided for them, and when it drove away from the door thirty human souls with their accompanying bodies were packed into it for freight. They sang a lusty Christmas carol as they went; and the watchman of the period, yclept a leather-head, only smiled as they swept by, and remarked to himself that they were having a good time. They did have a good time. It took little to amuse them, and their enjoyment was thorough. To them the disease ennui was unknown. They even found it fun at

odd times to embark in a Kipp & Brown sleigh and ride up to Chelsea and back. As for the boy part of that generation, we could have ridden forever in those great schooners of the streets. Six, eight, or ten horses drew the sleighs, and sometimes they were so crowded inside and out that not a fly could have found resting-place there. How they whirled through the drifts, flew over ice, careened on the hillocks where the sidewalks had emptied their burdens of snow, and with shriek and song and shout from the inmates dashed by the smiling and amused lines of pedestrians. But they never escaped delicate attentions from the boys who had no sixpences with which to purchase a ride. These would gather at the corners, collect heaps of snow-balls, and then open fire upon the excursionists. It was of no avail to expostulate. The police never interfered with any legitimate fun. All that could be done was literally to bow before the onset, and run the gantlet as resignedly as possible. Ah me! it is a delight to recall these wild excursions through Canal Street, up Hudson, beyond the rural homes of old Greenwich Village, out among the open streets and surviving farm-houses of the hamlet of Chelsea. It was only a sixpenny ride, this moonlight dash beside the Hudson, but it had an element of romance in it which sets my blood tingling as I think of it. I wonder if the girl who sat beside me is still living? Many and many an old boy (it would be irreverent to speak of old girls, wouldn't it?) will feel the sluggish heart-beat quicken as he reads this paragraph, and will drop the paper, close his eyes, lean back, and think. And those who watch his smile will see again the likeness of the urchin of fifty years ago.

It was a religious observance with my sisters and me to select carefully the largest stockings owned in the family and to tack them securely, at an early hour in the evening, to the old-fashioned wooden mantelpiece in the basement. This was a ceremony we intrusted to no hands but our own. My little sisters—I can scarcely see them now as I look back through the mist of tears—our little sisters, I should say, for this night I carry with me, I am sure, the tender memories of many an old boy other than he who writes this passage—they cannot be forgotten. It was only yesterday that in the quaint attire of their girlhood they trundled their hoops around the park and flung back their curls to the autumn winds—only yesterday we drew them to school on our sleds, and defended them chivalrously against the cannonade of snow-balls—only yesterday, it seems, and yet they have been dust and ashes for more than thirty years. To-night they come back to revisit us—your sisters and mine, of whom the world says, "Let me see; they died young, did they not?" But we know better; we know they never died at all, for our heart in its love keeps them immortal.

At early daybreak we three, my sisters and I, darted down the stairs in swift silence to the basement. We did not find enough in the stockings to content a child of to-day, but we were, nevertheless, as happy as the children of a king. The fact is that the child of to-day has ceased to be appreciative. Toys have become so many and expensive, juvenile literature has grown so extensive and luxurious, and all the appliances for the coddling of the young have so multiplied, that everything is taken as a matter of course by the youth-

ful constituent. But the fathers and grandsires of the existing race of small Sybarites were much more circumscribed. Most of the toys of their day were rude and cheap, and many of them, I am bound to admit, undeniably homely. These primitive animals, dolls, soldiers, and arks were voted "plenty good enough to be all broken to pieces in a day or two." But we were happy in their possession. No one thought of finding fault with the want of expression or natural hair in a doll, or the fact that an animal's legs were cut bias, or a soldier had no eyes. I verily believe that if I had been dropped suddenly into one of the huge toy marts of to-day, I should have said to myself that dear old Aladdin had lent me his lamp, and I had unconsciously been rubbing it. As for candies, our parents went down to the candy-store of R. L. & A. Stuart, at the corner of Chambers and Hudson streets (where I have stood on the sidewalk by the hour and watched the progress of candy manufacture in the basement), bought us each a horn of sugar-plums, with an old-fashioned picture on it, and broken candy to an amount limited only by the size of our stockings. This was wholesome and healthful, as were the apples and oranges that were used as makeweights to fill heel and toe of the stocking, and give it the proper bulge.

I am sure the children of to-day do not appreciate all that has been done for them in literature during the past thirty years. There was but one weekly paper published then for the little ones—the *Youths' Companion*, printed at Boston, and one magazine, published by old Tommy Stanford, on lower Broadway—both of them about as dreary in point of interest as could well be imagined. Now every book-firm in our

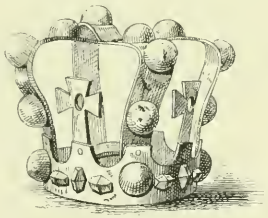
THE ILLUMINATION IN NEW YORK ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT WASHINGTON

leading cities is putting its best work into books and periodicals for children, and our most brilliant writers are catering to their tastes. Do the boys who were my contemporaries remember the literary chaff that was fed to us? There were the soul-thrilling and mirth-provoking adventures of Sandford and Merton, with that irredeemable prig, Mr. Tutor Barlow, and his endless object-lessons. It was a highly moral book, also insufferably dull, and every mischievous boy had at least six copies of it presented to him in a lifetime. From the Sunday-school library of St. John's Chapel I once drew the blood-curdling account of the great plague in London, which Mr. Daniel Defoe wrote entirely from his own imagination, but which I devoutly believed to be true. It was so unspeakably horrible that it gave me a succession of nightmares for a week. A history of Trinity Church, the life of an early bishop, a record of frontier missionary work in Ontario County, the exhilarating hymns of Dr. Watts, a life of Daniel, and a *Boys' Own Book* were gifts made to me from time to time, with others so dreary that I have been glad to forget their titles. But I made it up in other ways. Surreptitiously I formed acquaintance with Master Humphrey and Little Nell; enjoyed a rainy afternoon with Quilp in his summer-house, listened to Dick Swiveller as he played upon his flute, and laughed at the antics of Sam Weller; felt my heart beat high when Ivanhoe rode into the lists, and chuckled, as an incipient Latinist had a right to do, at the scholastic conceits of that prince of adventurers, Major Dugald Dalgetty. These books I would read late at night by the fire in the back parlor, and when detected, and the craving for stronger mental food ad-

mitted, I was introduced at the age of twelve to the fellowship of Robinson Crusoe, the delights of the "Arabian Nights," and the secrets of Charles Dickens's "Christmas Carol." Dear old Robinson Crusoe! I was sorry when I learned that he was but a creation of Defoe's brain—for I had read his story when lying hidden under the bushes of St. John's Park, and had crept out to search there for the strange footprint in the sand.

There is one feature of the Christmas season which I shall never cease to miss, and whose loss I shall always deplore. In the younger and more primitive days of the city the ladies of the various parishes took upon them the task of preparing the decorations for the churches. There were no wreaths or stars or crosses to be had in the markets, but the evergreens were ordered in bulk from the country. Huge hemlock-trees, great bushes of laurel, masses of ground-pine, cedar and pine branches—all were dumped in one heterogeneous heap in the Sunday-school rooms, and the deft fingers of the ladies were torn and blackened in moulding the pile into shapes of beauty. But there were three weeks of solid enjoyment in it. We children put the greens into bunches and handed them to our elders. Sometimes it was a quiet young gentleman whose heart was woven into the wreath the maiden was weaving. Sometimes it was a buxom widow who kept half a dozen gentlemen and twenty children at work. I remember that, small as we were, we had our favorite taskmasters, and carefully avoided sundry dictatorial old maids. As I grew older, I discovered that it was almost as pleasant working among the Christmas greens as battling for favors under the mis-

tletoe. Besides, there was a sublime satisfaction in looking up from the family pew, during a prosy sermon, and watching a wreath certain fair fingers had woven. What, in comparison with such a treasure, does the purchased decoration signify? Indeed, the dressing of a church for Christmas has become a lost art. The sexton attends to it now. He buys a few trees, crosses, and wreaths, and sticks them here or there as his fancy dictates. But in the dear old days of lang syne we elaborated a plan months beforehand, and made the sanctuary a bower of Christmas life and glory—creating in those plain, old-fashioned interiors a "beauty of holiness."



COPPER CROWN FROM CUPOLA OF KING'S COLLEGE

CHAPTER XI

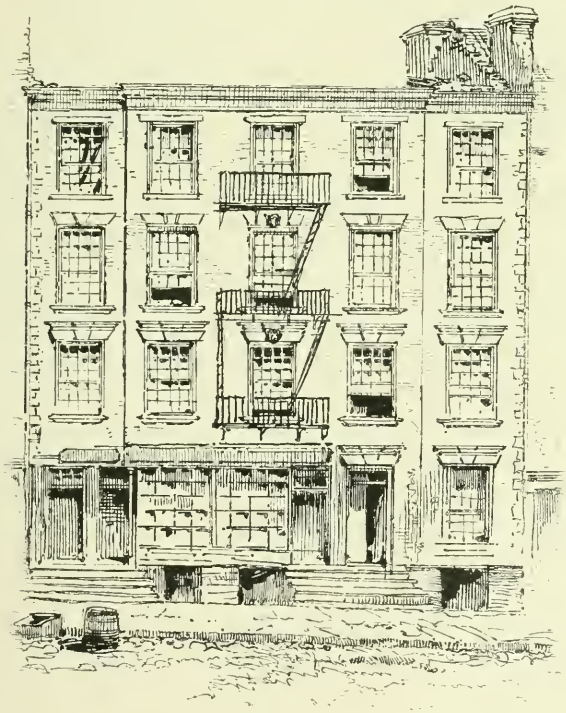
A METROPOLIS OF STRANGERS—SOME OLD MANSION-HOUSES ON THE EAST SIDE—CHARACTERISTICS OF BOWERY LIFE—BULL'S HEAD AND THE AMPHITHEATRE—THE STUYVESANT PEAR-TREE—A HAUNTED HOUSE

NO historian of New York gives half so graphic a picture of the embryo metropolis of fifty years ago as my correspondent, who writes: "I do not think that people can understand the size of our city in these days. We all knew 'who was who.' Old Mrs. Stuart, in black brocade, selling candy by the penny's worth at Chambers and Greenwich streets; Katy Ferguson, on Hudson Street, making all the jelly and sweetmeats, and Mrs. Isaac Sayres, in Harrison Street, preparing all the wedding-cake, were types of the time. Everybody knew them, as all knew the ministers and our few rich men."

The city is changed, indeed, since then. Not many months ago I stood at my window on Washington Square, looking out upon a desolate fall day, and hesitating whether to venture into the power of the storm. A drearier morning I had never seen, and there at my feet was a little funeral procession ready to start from the apartment-house next door. One becomes used to such sights in a great city, but my heart ached that morning for the people who had to carry their dead to the grave amid such utterly desolate surroundings. They were strangers, as I supposed, and I had no cu-

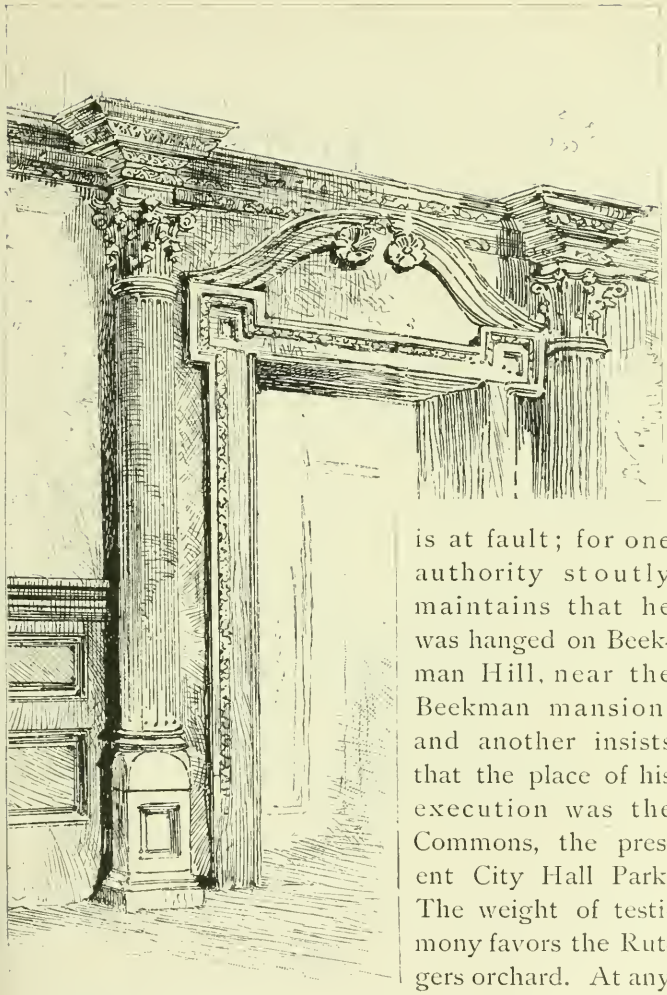
riosity to watch them, but a day or two afterwards I learned that this had been the funeral of an old and dear friend. He had gone away from his Long Island home a year before in search of health, and had recently returned to the city to die. It is infinitely easy in this cosmopolitan community to drop out of the current, and tears for the dead are a luxury which a busy age is apt to grudge.

From the top of Chatham Square one could once look upon two celebrated mansions — the Walton



THE WALTON HOUSE IN LATER YEARS

House and the home of Col. Henry Rutgers. When Pearl Street was known as Queen Street, and was an aristocratic quarter, when its gardens reached down to the East River, and its neighborhood was free from the contaminations of shops, the Walton House was in its glory. The richness of its furnishings, its gold plate, and its magnificent entertainments, were quoted in Parliament as an excuse for taxing the American colonies. As a boy I read of this, and I used to go out of my way, as opportunity offered, to look at it, and try to recall in my mind its vanished splendors. Its gentility then had grown very shabby. The high ceilings were there, and the door-ways through which Howe and Clinton and André had passed, and the floor on which a future King of England had danced a minuet with the fairest of New York's rebel daughters; but it was inexpressibly sad to witness the advance of squalor, and I was not sorry when the building was torn down. The Rutgers homestead occupied, when I was a boy, the block bounded by Clinton, Rutgers, Madison, and Cherry streets, a relic of the great Rutgers farm. Colonel Rutgers was a model citizen. They had no coal strikes in his day, for they used no coal then, but once in a while they had a fuel famine. Once, during the '20s, the city was ice-bound, and no wood could be brought in across the rivers, and the suffering of the poor was terrible for a while. Colonel Rutgers distributed his supply among his poor neighbors; and when this was exhausted, even tore down his fences and cut down his trees for their use. It was from the limb of a tree in his orchard that Capt. Nathan Hale, the martyr spy of the Revolution, is believed to have been hanged. But even here tradition



DOORWAY IN THE HALL OF THE WALTON HOUSE

is at fault; for one authority stoutly maintains that he was hanged on Beekman Hill, near the Beekman mansion, and another insists that the place of his execution was the Commons, the present City Hall Park. The weight of testimony favors the Rutgers orchard. At any rate, he was sacrificed on our city's soil, and we seem to have forgotten it. André has his monument; Hale has none.

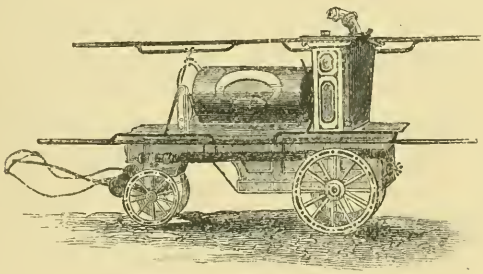
As I turn into the Bowery from Chatham Square I am once more reminded of the sad story of Charlotte

Temple. On the north side of Pell Street, just west of the Bowery, are two frame houses painted yellow. In one of these the unfortunate girl, whose sorrows set a whole generation weeping, ended her life—murdered by a British officer to whom she had trustingly given her heart. The stone house in Art Street in which she had lived was torn down long ago. The frame house that screened her last agonies from the sight of those who loved her and would have rescued her still survives, though few are aware that there is any romance connected with such an apparently commonplace building.

But the Bowery has never been a place of sentiment or romance. Its life was largely passed out-doors; its people loved the street and its excitements. Those who are living and remember all about it, have told me of the crowd that daily gathered around No. 17 Bowery to see the Boston stage, carrying the United States mail, depart and arrive. It was a great event in that day. Those who travelled by coach down into the wilds of Massachusetts Bay were regarded as a species of Argonauts, and indeed the journey by such mode would be a formidable one to-day. Beyond the Bowery Village the line of travel that is now known as Third Avenue was called the Boston Road, a title that is still maintained on the other side of Harlem River, in spite of changes caused by annexation. To my young mind the Bowery was always associated with the excitement of the venerable but lively institution known as Bull's Head. I can recall that institution as it existed on Third Avenue, where a bank stands as a monument to its name, and the legends that I have heard in connection with the

old Bull's Head Tavern are legion. From the time of our Dutch ancestors until modern monopoly swept the business into the New Jersey abattoir, New York did not know how to exist without its cattle market, and when it disappeared one of the liveliest features of the city's trade was blotted out.

The Bowery Theatre was erected on the site of the Bull's Head Tavern in 1826, the Mayor laying the corner-stone. One of my correspondents writes of this theatre that "it was burned to the ground in the summer of 1828, at an early hour of the evening. When its huge columns fell it shook the whole city from centre to circumference, as I well remember." Alarms



AN OLD GOOSE-NECK ENGINE

of fire were frequent even then, sometimes reaching five hundred in a year. The firemen worked well (and, it must be admitted, they fought well, too), but their methods were not sufficient to check such fires as the burning of the Park Theatre and the Bowery made. When the Park Theatre burned, the site was abandoned as a place of amusement, but the Bowery Theatre rose again from its ashes, and kept its old features unchanged for half a century.

The street itself has always been a great place for "shows." One of my earliest memories of the Bowery is standing in front of a brilliantly painted canvas on that thoroughfare, not far from Chatham Square, staring in open-eyed wonder at the pictures of a calf with two heads, warranted to move two ways at the same time, and a pig of enormous proportions. This is a characteristic of the street to this day. Then, too, there was the New York Circus Amphitheatre, an earthly paradise to the small boy of the period. Ah, what a lovely place it was! That is, it was not beautiful to the eye, but, on the contrary, coarse and common. The canvas overhead was unclean, the seats were dirty, the sawdust smelled abominable, and the surroundings were cheap and tawdry. But when the oil lamps were turned up, and began to glare and smoke, when the band played, when the solemn procession of equestrians entered, when the vividly painted goddesses of the arena followed them on prancing steeds, we boys began to climb up to the seventh heaven. We reached it when the burly clown threw himself at a jump into the sawdust and uttered the welcome, "Here we are again!" I hardly expect to enjoy anything sublunary as I enjoyed those afternoons at the Amphitheatre. The smell of sawdust brings it all back to me at times, and then phantom horses and riders paw the air, and a ghostly clown compels my very soul to chuckle over a joke that tickled the children of Pythagoras.

Along the old Boston Road once stood a series of mile-stones that extended from New York to and through the land of the Puritans. One of these still stands on the Bowery, near Prince Street, bearing the

legend, "One mile from the City Hall." Another mile-stone was in the Bowery Village, which half a century ago clustered around the site of the present Cooper Institute and old St. Mark's Church. Beyond this point the Bowery stretched, always a noble avenue, but never an aristocratic one, in spite of the fact that it owed its existence to the country-seats of gentlemen—the "bouweries" of the solid Dutch burghers of two centuries ago.

As I remember this noted thoroughfare, it was a land of many rival carpet-stores, from which long lines of carpeting swayed to the breeze for blocks, festooned even from the roof; a land of dry-goods and notion stores that have since emigrated to Grand Street; a land, even from "way back," of the pawnbroker and dealer in musical instruments and jewelry; a land of the "original Jacobs" and "the real original Jacobs;" a land of oyster-saloons, in which one used to sit in a curtained stall, and need not be at table with disagreeable neighbors: a land in which the signs of the oyster-houses were as primitive as economy could suggest, consisting only of a round red ball of canvas, into which a candle was thrust for illumination at night; a land of daguerrotypes and ambrotypes, in the day in which the invention of Daguerre (which our own Dr. Draper had just anticipated while Professor of Chemistry at Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia) was still spoken of as wonderful; a land of flannel shirts and "dickeys"—the latter being false shirt-fronts tied with strings over the masculine breast to conceal the flannel on dress occasions; a land in which the church building did not flourish, but where the tavern and bar were frequent; a land with few foreigners, but where stal-

wart American artisans were indigenous; a land in which one could get shaved for sixpence or have the hair cut for a shilling, in a shop whose floor was sanded and whose gentlemanly proprietor handed you a small glass at the close to see whether the operation was successful; a land in which life could be made comfortable at a dollar a day, and board could be had at its hotels for four or five dollars a week, though horse-cars were unknown, the telegraph an infant industry patronized only by the rich, and lager beer a vulgar innovation which even Bowery society was trying to frown out of sight.

It was over two hundred years ago that the Governor and Council of New Amsterdam gave permission to establish a hamlet near the "bouwerie" of Governor Stuyvesant. A tavern, a blacksmith-shop, and half a dozen other buildings were the result. Old Peter Stuyvesant contributed a chapel, in which Hermanus Van Hoboken (from whom the city of Hoboken is named), school-master in the city, read service every Sunday. His widow devised the edifice to the Reformed Dutch Church; not many years afterwards it passed into the control of the Episcopal congregation of "St. Mark's Church in the Bowery." Under its consecrated walls rest the remains of the stout old Dutch soldier and statesman, and I wonder how many who pass by care to read the inscription on the tablet set into the wall that records the life and death of one of New York's great men of old time? The old Governor's mansion, a large, square, imposing edifice, built of small yellow brick imported from Holland, stood upon a site close by, and was destroyed by fire in the Revolution. His well was still in existence in a vacant lot between Eleventh and Twelfth streets when I was

a boy. Two other mansion-houses were erected by his descendants, one near the East River shore, close by the present Avenue A and Sixteenth Street. There are many who still remember the winding lane that led to it from the old Stuyvesant pear-tree at Third Avenue and Thirteenth Street. The other mansion, known as the "Bowery House," stood at Second Avenue and Ninth Street. There is a host of us who can recall the famous pear-tree, said to have been planted by the hands of doughty Peter Stuyvesant himself, which had become a landmark early in this century, and which patriotic care had protected with an iron railing. The whole city mourned when the patriarch of more than two centuries at length fell. An effort was made to plant a tree of the same stock on the old site, but it did not prove a success.

At the upper end of the Bowery, Vauxhall Garden maintained its reputation as a fashionable place of refreshment and amusement until the middle of the present century. A handsome saloon, in which performances were held, and trees and groves under which tables were set, were the features of this once famous resort. Admission to the garden was free; to the "saloon," two shillings. Here Russell sang, classic tableaus were exhibited, and the ballet was danced in properly lengthened skirts.

An old friend writes to me that a two-story, peaked-roof brick house, on the east side of the Bowery (now Fourth Avenue), and upon the site of the present Cooper Institute, was known as the haunted house. "It never had a permanent tenant," writes my friend, the lawyer, "from the time I first recollect it, nearly sixty years ago, until the time of its demolition, some

THE STUYVESANT PEAR-TREE

thirty years since. The ghosts, it was said, unceremoniously flung the rash occupants into the streets as soon as the shades of evening had descended upon their first day of attempted occupation."

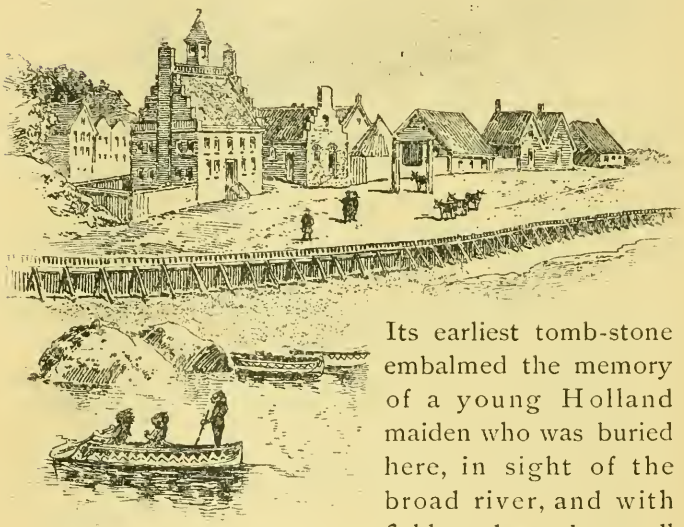
CHAPTER XII

OUR CITY BURIAL-PLOTS—ILLUSTRIOUS DUST AND ASHES—A WOMAN'S FIFTY YEARS OF WAITING—THREE HEBREW CEMETERIES—THE BURKING EPISODE—SLAVES OF THE OLDEN TIME

"FELIX," said my grandmother, with an altogether unaccustomed solemnity, which was emphasized by the silence of her knitting-needles, "do you believe that the angels are in any way like the cherubim carved on the tombstones in old Trinity Church-yard, all head and wings, and nothing else? I hope not," continued the dear old lady, presently, "for it would be awful to live with such creatures for even a thousand years. Well, well, it doesn't signify. I suppose we could get used to that, too. But, Felix, just imagine your poor old grandmother parading a street in the New Jerusalem in such company. I really think I'd have to ask him to go back and fasten on his body. I'm afraid that I should, even if I had to offend him."

Quaint, and in some respects horribly suggestive, as are the winged heads that adorn many of the burial-stones in the church-yard of old Trinity and St. Paul's, I do not believe that any one would want them changed. They belong to an era in which the imagination and art were alike crude, but an era of sterling virtues. There was no poetry in the psalms in metre that were sung in the congregations, but the poetry of an honest and patriotic life irradiated church and home. It is a long and beautiful record that is unfolded in what was

once the new burying-ground of New Amsterdam, far away from the little dorp, or village, that clustered around Old Slip, Coenties Slip, the great dock, and the fort, but is now known as Trinity Church-yard.



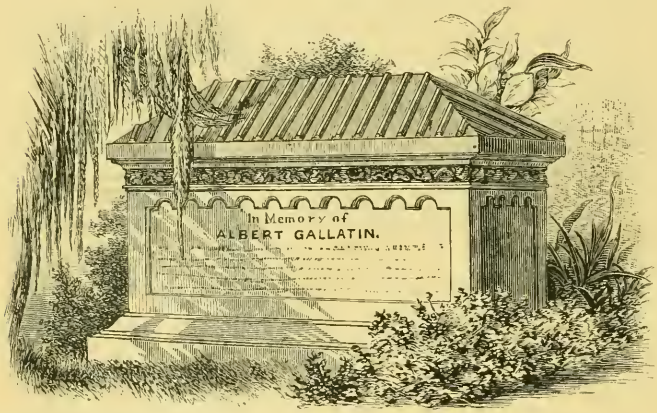
COENTIES SLIP IN THE DUTCH TIMES

Its earliest tomb-stone embalmed the memory of a young Holland maiden who was buried here, in sight of the broad river, and with fields and woods on all sides, in 1639—more than half a century before the first Trinity Church was erected. Its latest graves hold the ashes of men who fought for the union of the States five and twenty years ago. I have always honored the parish of old Trinity for preserving intact these down-town resting-places of the dead. They are not merely pleasant breathing-spots amid the din of business warfare, but they are unresting preachers of

shadow and reality. Millions of dollars have been offered for the land; projects have been mooted to drive thoroughfares through the plots which our Saxon ancestors delighted to call God's-acre; but the vestry of Trinity parish have stood guard sturdily over the dust committed to their care, and waved off the desecrating touch of speculation. So may it always be.

There are few cities richer in graves than our own. Within the boundaries of New York rest the ashes of a long line of distinguished men. In the vaults of old Trinity and St. Paul's, in the Marble Cemetery, in Trinity Cemetery, in the old church-yards beyond Central Park and above Harlem River, sleep the ancestors of the city's representative families—men eminent in professional and business life—a line too long to enumerate. A volume could be written (and one was planned years ago) in giving the brief but honorable record of their lives. But there are a large number of graves fitted to become shrines of patriotism, and I fear sometimes that we do not realize all that this means, or we would do them still more honor. The man who stood next to Washington in making the union of these States possible sleeps at one end of the Island of Manhattan, and at the other rests on his laurels the soldier whose skill and patriotism kept the Union indissoluble. Alexander Hamilton's grave is in Trinity Church-yard; General Grant's tomb is at Riverside Park; and between, under the walls of an old church which he founded, moulders the dust of brave, hot-headed Petrus Stuyvesant, last and most gallant of the old Dutch Governors of the colony. The city which can boast such dust in its soil has a right to plume itself on its past.

Illustrious men lie buried in every corner of the church-yard of old Trinity. Francis Lewis, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a typical New York merchant, is interred there; and his son, Gen. Morgan Lewis, a soldier of 1812, sleeps at his side. Albert Gallatin, the distinguished Secretary of the Treasury; Col. Marinus Willett, of Revolutionary memory; William Bradford, colonial printer and ed-



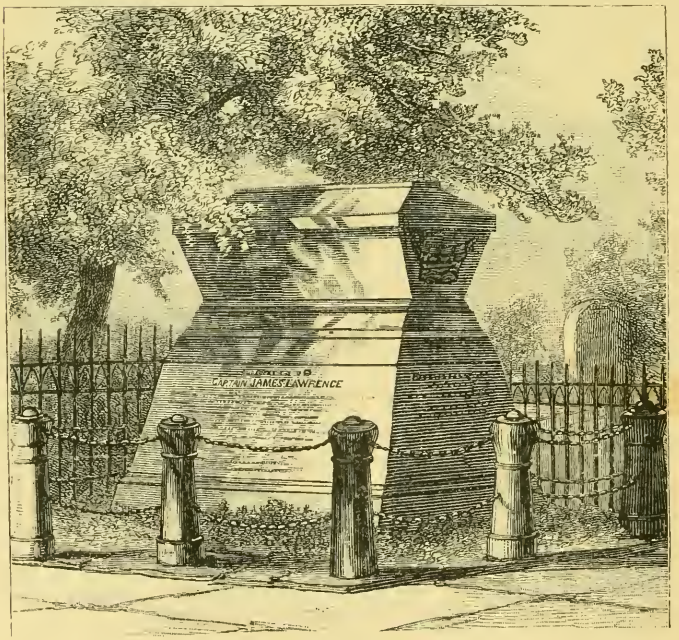
TOMB OF ALBERT GALLATIN

itor; Robert Fulton, who launched the first steamboat on the Hudson; Captain Lawrence, who lost the *Chesapeake*, but sent his last battle-cry, "Don't give up the ship!" ringing down the centuries; Bishop Hobart, grand pioneer of the cross; Gen. Phil Kearney, the Murat of the latest struggle for liberty—these are but a few of the mighty men who rest in peace under the shadow of Trinity's spire. And the women? Ah, who shall fitly hymn their praise and tell the story of the mingled sweetness and strength of the lives they

quietly lived and that yet "smell sweet and blossom in the dust," and of the other lives that they nurtured up into honor and renown, content to shine by their reflected light? Of all the inscriptions on stone in the old burial-ground at the head of Wall Street, the most touching to me is that which measures the span of life of Captain Lawrence's widow. It is pathetic in its perfect simplicity, recording only the name and the date of birth and burial. The young wife was but twenty-five years of age when her husband climbed up into immortal glory from the bloody deck of the *Chesapeake*, and she lived for more than half a century in her widowhood. Fifty-two years afterwards, in the autumn of 1865, she entered into rest, but not until she had witnessed a conflict that shook the land well-nigh to its destruction, and had seen the sword finally sheathed and the ploughshare again at work.

Other heroes lie buried elsewhere on our city's soil —General Montgomery under the chancel of St. Paul's Church, and Admiral Farragut at Woodlawn Cemetery. Gouverneur Morris, diplomatist, statesman, and friend of Washington, sleeps in his family vault beyond Harlem River, under the shadow of St. Ann's Church, and for years the body of President Monroe rested in the Marble Cemetery on Second Street, until, in 1859, Virginia asked for the guardianship of his ashes, and New York courteously yielded it. There is one other grave that should not be forgotten. A plain white slab, which stands in the church-yard of St. Patrick's Cathedral, bears this inscription: "À la mémoire de Pierre Landais, ancien Contre-Amiral au service des États-Unis, Qui Disparut Juin, 1818, âgé 87 ans." There is a whole romance, and a bitter one,

in this brief record. A lieutenant in the French Navy, Landais entered the service of the United States, distinguished himself, and was given command of a frigate. In the battle between the *Scrapis* and the *Bon Homme Richard*, poor Landais, who executed his manœuvres by his text-books, won the name of coward, and Paul Jones, in his disregard of all rules, became a hero. Cited before the Naval Committee of Congress, none of whom understood French or navigation, Landais was heard and then discharged from the service in disgrace. Again and again he sought another hearing, but in vain, and for forty years he walked the



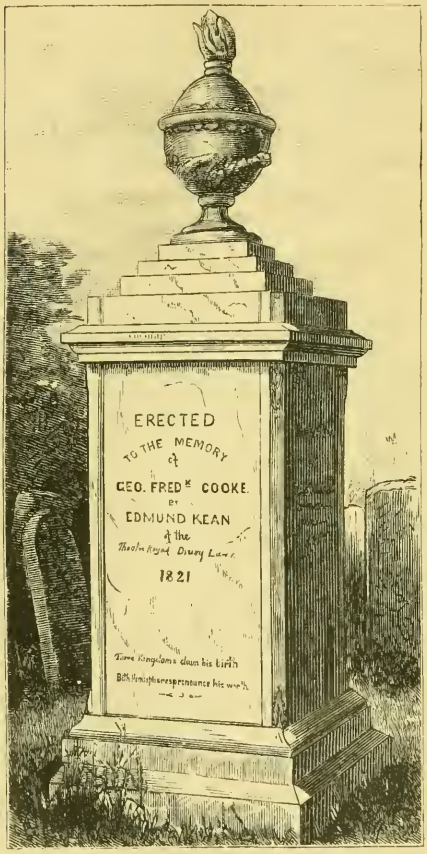
TOMB OF CAPTAIN LAWRENCE

streets in proud and solitary poverty, donning his old Continental uniform on great occasions, and at last, forgotten and unnoticed, as his epitaph says, he "disappeared" from life.

Although Trinity Cemetery is comparatively modern, it is the burial-place of many old citizens of New York who were eminent in their various walks of life, and of many of our older families. Among the notable graves which dot that beautiful sleeping-ground of the dead are those of Gen. John A. Dix, a hero of the wars of 1812 and 1861; Bishop Wainwright, William B. Astor, Samuel B. Ruggles, Don Alonzo Cushman, John H. Contoit, Baker, the artist; Alexander B. McDonald, Peter and Henry Erben, organ-builders of ancient renown, and the Rev. Drs. Higbee and Ogilby. The list of old families embraces the names of Aymar, Ward, Storm, Cisco, Palmer, Lewis, Mount, Dash, Voorhis, Guion, Freeman, Dresser, Cotheal, Innes, Egleston, Gilbert, and Hoffman. It should not be forgotten, also, that in the shadow of the spire of old St. Paul's lie buried the Sieur de Rochefontaine, one of Count Rochambeau's officers; George Frederick Cooke, the actor, whose monument was erected by the elder Kean; and two distinguished sons of Ireland—Thomas Addis Emmet and Dr. Macneven.

In noticing the burial-plots in this city that have been obliterated within my memory—and I can recall more than a score between the rifled vaults of the old Dutch Church on Nassau Street and Harlem River—it seems to me that none pay more regard to the dust of the dead than do the Jews. There is no synagogue to overshadow the old cemetery on New Bowery, yet the dead who were inearthed there nearly two centu-

ries ago remain undisturbed, and on the old tombstones the graven hands out-stretched in benediction still remain distinct to the passer-by, to mark the resting-place of one belonging to the house and lineage of Aaron. Another of these burial-places is on Eleventh Street, near Sixth Avenue, so hidden by a high brick wall that one can easily pass it by without notice. It is part of a large cemetery that in the early years of the present century stretched along the upper bank of Minetta Brook, and was the property of the congregation Shearith Israel, to whom also the burial-plot on the New Bowery belongs. During the yellow-fever visitations graves multiplied here, and when it became necessary to lay out Eleventh Street a new plot



GRAVE OF GEORGE FREDERICK COOKE

was purchased on West Twenty-first Street, near Sixth Avenue, and all the bodies were removed from the lower to the upper cemetery, except the few that still slumber in the little summer-garden by the way-side. Long since the upper cemetery, which is still preserved intact, and is now hidden by a high brick wall on Twenty-first Street, became "old," though there are people yet living who remember it as part of a pleasant vista of field and wood, and not far from a little brook that babbled its way down to the Hudson at Twenty-sixth Street.

An old New Yorker and valued correspondent, Mr. George A. Halsey, in a letter refers to the burking excitement which prevailed in this city in 1829–30, occasioned by alleged mysterious disappearances of many persons during that period, and intensified by the horror of the Burke kidnappings, which had just electrified Edinburgh and the United Kingdom. In former years there had been a terrible riot, arising from a rumor that the doctors, not content with exhuming bodies from the potter's field and the negroes' burial-ground, then considered lawful prey, had been rifling graves in city cemeteries. But in this case the work of the grave was anticipated. Mr. Halsey says:

"I recollect one of the stories then prevalent, and universally believed, that missing children had been found in the haunts of the burkers in our city fastened in a sitting position in a chair with their feet immersed in warm water, an important artery cut, and slowly bleeding to death. All that winter the community was in a state bordering on panic; in the evening ladies and children never left their homes alone unless accompanied by one or more able-bodied male attend-

ants, though but going a block or less away to church or to a neighbor's, and their protectors were always provided with stout bludgeons or other means of defence. I recollect going out in the evening during that exciting period with my father occasionally to church on the next corner, and his carrying a stout club of hickory cord-wood at such times, taken from the convenient pile in our cellar (there was no coal used in those days), and when the congregation filed out into the street at the conclusion of the services I observed others of the male attendants similarly equipped. I recollect that the colored population were even more excited, none of them then being so bold as to leave home after dusk. The other day I asked a venerable old Ethiopian, whom I have known from boyhood, when his aunt was a domestic in my parents' house in Liberty Street, whether he recollected the 'burking' affair; he answered, almost to the verge, apparently, of trembling, that he did fully remember, and that the reminiscence was painful."

He adds:

"This reminds me that our old colored people, those who first beheld the light of day in the closing years of the last century, have nearly all gone to their final resting-place; I know of but one or two of them left. A few weeks ago an old 'uncle' of that race, well up in the nineties, respected by all who knew him, and a resident of the city from his birth, died in Cedar Street, around the corner from my office, and an old 'aunty,' who had lived here from birth, died only last week near by in Nassau Street, equally respected and but a year or two younger. I observe also now and then in this vicinity one venerable 'aunty' tottering along

through her old haunts, who has nearly approached the century of her existence. I receive visits quarterly or oftener from an aged 'uncle' who resides in our suburbs, and was a slave of my great-grandfather and afterwards of my grandfather. He was manumitted under the State law in 1827, and is now in his ninety-ninth year; sight, memory, and hearing seemingly unimpaired, he has a walk and general vigor equal to most men of sixty! I know of none of our race now living who have attained so great an age by a decade of years, and think their longevity must be the greater of the two."

The question of longevity is a difficult one to settle in the absence of reliable data as to the colored race, but I am inclined to think that the average is in favor of the white people. It is not many days since a hale old gentleman of ninety-four, representative of one of our oldest Knickerbocker families, came from his home, four miles beyond the Post-office, to have a talk with Felix Oldboy, and I am in search of another nonagenarian on the west side who has been reported to me as having a much livelier interest in the proper training of his whiskers and his general appearance than in any antiquities, local or otherwise. I have known many of the old slaves in my boyhood, but do not know of any burial of blacks in our cemeteries, or of any negro graves in our city limits. In many parts of New Jersey, and out on Long Island, there are old "slave" burying-grounds—for the most part pictures of desolation and neglect—but the old negro burying-grounds set apart by the city seem to have been largely succeeded by the potter's field. In a crowded, growing city the living push aside the dead, sometimes almost

rudely, and therefore I am always glad to see a city graveyard and to acknowledge its humanizing effect.

I have been led into this chapter on our city's dead because only yesterday I heard a dispute between officials and members of an old city church in reference to a proposition to build houses upon the burial-plot at the side of the edifice. The plot is a small one, covering only three or four building-lots, but it is all furrowed with graves and gray with granite headstones, and the inscriptions on the stones tell the history of the first half-century of a pioneer church. Some one asked me what I thought of the proposition, and I said: "Restore God's-acre; make it beautiful with green turf, fragrant shrubs, and sweet flowers; invite the sunshine to touch its graves and the birds of the air to come and sing among its trees, and then let it preach its own sermon. No orator in the pulpit will be so eloquent as that little church-yard. It will tell to all who pass by that the sleepers fought a good fight and died in the faith."

A little uncle of mine, who was only five years of age when God called him, sleeps somewhere in the church-yard of old Trinity. The first-born of the flock, his little feet crossed over Jordan all alone, and went pattering up the hills on the other side and into the Promised Land, while his father and mother tarried behind in tears in the wilderness. So often I think of him as I pass by, and wonder what he looked like on earth, and how he will look by-and-by. Perhaps I am the only one now, in all the world of life, who remembers. In the same way, to all of us, the rows of graves, hemmed in by busy haunts of life, are so many silent but effective preachers.

CHAPTER XIII

ECHOES OF SWEET SINGERS—OLD THEATRES ON BROADWAY—AN ACCIDENTAL THOROUGHFARE — EVOLUTION OF UNION SQUARE—A STREET THAT WAS NOT OPENED—HISTORY OF A CHURCH BELL

AN unknown correspondent writes gently to chide Mr. Oldboy for not mentioning "Palmo's Opera-house, which preceded Burton's in Chambers Street, and Thompson's famous restaurant, which was quite as popular as Taylor's," and situated near it. He adds: "When Mr. O. gets above Howard Street, he forgets to mention the original Olympic Theatre (Mitchell's), which was a very popular little box; also Wood's Minstrels, which, though later, were quite as much liked as Christy's. He also fails to mention Wallack's Theatre, near Broome Street, where they had a splendid company."

Peccavi, especially in forgetting Thompson's, where many a time and oft the inner boy and man was sweetly refreshed. As a matter of fact, I do not recall Palmo's Opera-house, but I have the liveliest kind of remembrance of Burton's Theatre, and "Aminidab Sleek" is as vivid a portraiture in memory as it was in life the first time that I beheld it. Fancy going down to Chambers Street to meet the beauty and fashion of the metropolis at its most select theatre; and yet it was only yesterday, or not longer ago than the day before! As to opera, I first fell in love with it

at Castle Garden, when a youth, and certainly I never got as much delight out of a dollar as came to me from that amount of money expended in the purchase of a ticket which admitted me to both a matinée and evening performance. The artists were Alboni, Sontag, etc., and the opera for the evening was "Lucrezia Borgia." Since then I have never entered Castle Garden without recalling the wonderful effect of "Il segreto" as sung by Alboni, which roused the vast audience that filled the great floor and galleries to wild enthusiasm. Women as well as men rose to their feet, and the encores were like an echo of Niagara. Somehow I cannot get as much value out of $5 invested to-day in opera, and I really do not think the fault is wholly my own.

It is over sixty years since the Garcia troupe gave New York its first taste of Italian opera. They made their appearance at the Park Theatre in "Il Barbiere di Seviglia," and carried the town by storm. No wonder, for Mlle. Garcia, afterwards known the world over as the great Malibran, made her début here at the time, though but seventeen years of age. New York recognized her genius, and laid its tribute of praise at her feet, crowding the old Park Theatre to listen delightedly to the same opera for thirty successive nights. The queer part of Malibran's experience here was her subsequent appearance at the Bowery Theatre in English opera. One can hardly fancy the opera flourishing at the new theatre opened in 1826 on the site of the old Bull's Head, and it did not succeed. The queen of song drew large audiences, and was paid at the rate of $600 a night, but after three weeks the attempt was abandoned, and the Bowery was turned

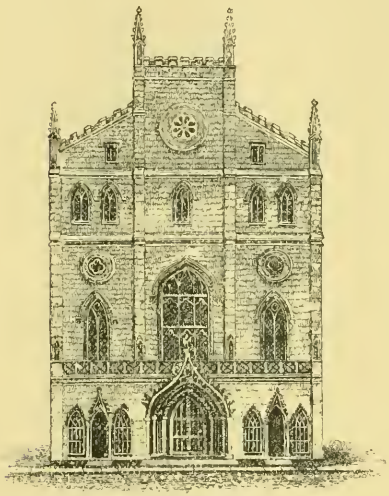
WEBB'S CONGRESS HALL, 142 BROADWAY

over to the legitimate drama. It was after this failure that Palmo opened his tasteful little opera-house with a choice troupe of artists, and for a time achieved the success that he deserved. But at last he was compelled to abandon the enterprise. The Astor Place Opera-house was an operatic failure from the time of its completion in 1846, and four years later had been converted into a menagerie which the boys delighted to visit, and into which I stole surreptitiously to save my dignity as a college student. The Academy of Music opened in 1855 with a blare of trumpets, and on that site have since been witnessed an infinite variety of entertainments and performances, many of which were not contemplated in the original projection of the institution.

My correspondent halts me again at Canal Street, and as we stand here I recall having read that Trinity Parish once offered to the congregation of another creed—Lutheran, I believe—a plot of several acres just where we stand, and that it was refused by the church authorities on the ground that they did not think it worth fencing in. It was all low, swampy ground hereabouts at the opening of the present century, tenanted by frogs and water-snakes, and covered by brambles. The boys and girls skated on the brook that flowed from the Collect Pond to the North River, eighty years ago, and went across it into the marshes to gather wild-flowers and berries. The people who were gray-headed when I was a boy have told me many an exciting adventure they had in the marshes when the century was young, and they usually wound up with a reflection that I caught myself making the other day—that if they had only known how rapidly the city was to

grow, they could have made themselves millionaires by investing a "mere song" in real estate.

There was one building on Broadway, below Canal Street, which I well remember, and which I should not have forgotten to mention—Masonic Hall, covering the site of the stores now known as 314 and 316 Broadway. The building was erected in 1826 by the Masonic fraternity, and was, for its time, an imposing affair. The saloon on the second floor, 100 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 25 feet in height, finished in the richest style of Gothic architecture, and intended to imitate the Chapel of Henry VIII. in London, was considered the most elegant apartment of the kind in the United States. It was used for public meetings, concerts, and balls, and as such I remember it. The building was then known as Gothic Hall, having passed out of the hands of the Masonic fraternity, in consequence of the serious and prolonged troubles growing out of the "Morgan" excitement. Gothic Hall stood between Pearl and Duane streets, and towered high above the small frame buildings on either side. These streets did not always bear their



MASONIC HALL

present names. Duane Street was formerly known as Barley Street, because of a famous brewery situated just west of Broadway, and Pearl Street was known as Magazine Street, because it led up from the magazine on an island in the Collect Pond. Worth Street was known as Anthony Street a generation ago, and its first name, Catharine Street, is still perpetuated in Catharine Lane. Franklin Street was formerly known as Sugarloaf Street. Even Broadway at this point has not always been thus designated. The lower portion of our great thoroughfare has been known from time immemorial as "The Broadway" and "Broadway Street," but from the City Hall Park to Astor Place it was called "St. George" or "Great George" Street up to the close of the last century, and still later it was commonly spoken of as the "Middle Road."

The original Olympic Theatre was at 442 Broadway, and later was known as the old Circus. It stood next door to Tattersall's. The later Olympic Theatre, which was first known as Laura Keene's, was situated between Houston and Bleecker streets. Wallack's Theatre, in 1853, was located at 485 Broadway. It had been known previously as Brougham's Lyceum. The Winter Garden Theatre succeeded Tripler Hall at 677 Broadway, and for a good while was a favorite place of amusement. A number of hotels, in addition to the Metropolitan and St. Nicholas, congregated in this neighborhood. On the east side were the American, the Union Hotel, the Collamore, and the Carroll House; and on the west side the new City Hotel, between Canal and Howard streets, the Prescott House, New York Hotel, and Astor Place Hotel. These were the hotels that marked the transition period be-

tween the down-town houses, which sought still to make the City Hall Park the hotel centre, and the erection of vast marble caravansaries beyond the Bowery cross-roads. For it is not much more than the flight of a generation since Franconi erected his Hippodrome tents upon the vacant lots in the rear of what is now the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and we boys went "out of town," as we thought it then, to see his imported curiosities. And no hotel-keeper of the day had summoned up sufficient courage to charge more than one dollar and a half for a day's board and lodging. One dollar a day had been the tariff at the Astor House, and an advance of 50 per cent. was all that conscience would allow. The old-fashioned hostlery at Broadway and Twenty-second Street, with broad verandas, shaded by great oaks and elms, which was the stopping-place of all the fast trotters of the day, would have blushed crimson over its clean white front had it ventured to present such a bill as the modern Boniface presents with a smile.

A man whom I often heard spoken of when a boy was Stephen B. Munn, a large property-holder in the vicinity of Broadway, Grand, and Broome streets, whose office was at the corner of Grand Street, and who had built, on Broadway above Broome, the two best houses standing in the neighborhood, which were very superior buildings for the times. In one of these he lived for a number of years, and he had for neighbors many of the sons of old settlers. On the block above were the houses of Dr. Livingston, and of Dr. Henry Mott, father of Dr. Valentine Mott. Robert Halliday and a branch of the Beekman family were also neighbors, and above Prince Street stood a hand-

some residence which had been erected by John Jacob Astor, and was occupied by his son-in-law, Walter Langdon. Opposite, in a modest brick house, lived at one time James Fenimore Cooper, the novelist. I remember his personal appearance, for in literature he was one of my chief heroes; the other was Washington Irving. Personally there was a marked contrast between the two, Mr. Cooper being as robust and athletic as Mr. Irving appeared delicate and of artistic fibre, but each somehow came up to my boyish ideal. They were devout Episcopalians, and always attended the diocesan conventions as delegates, and it was my delight to sit up in the gallery and watch their movements, and wonder how it must seem to be able to entertain the world with Rip Van Winkle, and Harvey Birch, the spy.

There was not much of Broadway above Union Square at that time. In fact, this great highway, destined to be trodden, as Horatio Seymour once told me, by more people than ever migrated through any other avenue of travel on the globe, was in reality an accident. Originally it was supposed that the city's main artery of travel would turn to the east of the commons and follow the old Boston Road. In point of fact, provision was made to that end. Park Row and Chatham Street, in connection with the lower part of Broadway and the Bowery, formed the original highway leading from the city into the interior, long known as the High Road to Boston. Business for a long time insisted upon turning to the east of Broadway at the City Hall Park, and owners of property were determined to keep the west side sacred to residences. But it was not so to be. Pearl Street ceased

to absorb the dry-goods trade half a century ago, and when A. T. Stewart spread his dry-goods nets on the "shilling side" of Broadway, that settled it.

But no one dreamed, a generation ago, that Union Square would be invaded by traffic, either in this century or in the next. It was a veritable paradise of exclusives. Its solid brown-stone and brick mansions frowned forbiddingly upon the frowzy little park in front, which they had found an unfenced triangle of waste land at the junction of Bowery Lane and the Middle or Bloomingdale Road, but which they had fenced in and planted with trees for their exclusive use. Here dwelt a solid race of men, and they meant to remain so. A single church stood on the west side, the Church of the Puritans, of which Dr. Cheever was pastor. It was a headquarters of abolitionism, and more than once I stole in there at night, when a college student, prepared to hear something "perfectly awful," which, as a matter of course, I did not hear! The late Frederic de Peyster told me that when he came to live in the house in which he died, in University Place, near Thirteenth Street, there was but one house which obstructed his view of the East River, and none that rose between him and the Hudson. That was only fifty years ago, and yet within that time a city of quiet homes rose about him and gave place to a dusty, noisy city of business. At the time of his death his was the only house in the block that had not been converted to business purposes, and from the outside it appeared lonesome enough.

The country-seats which had adorned "Sandy Hill, at the upper end of Broadway," and the "Minetta water" beyond, rapidly disappeared before the level-

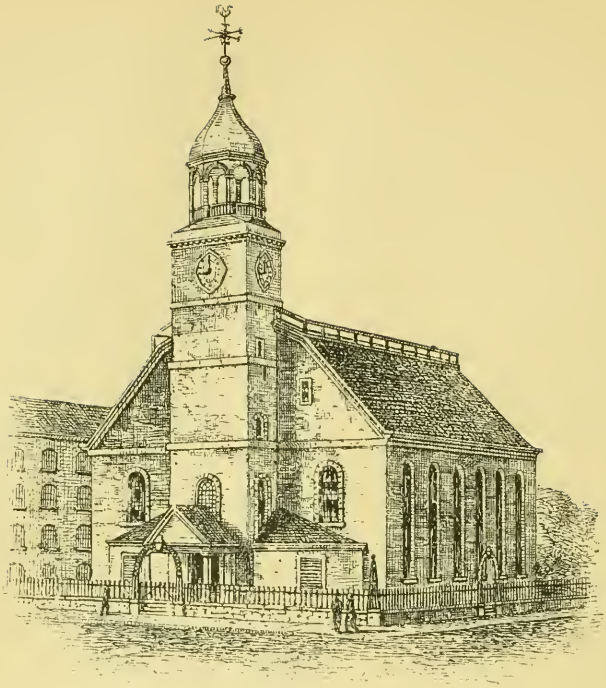
ling hand of improvement, as soon as Union Square became fashionable. The Elliot estate passed into the hands of Captain Robert R. Randall, who in turn deeded it to the Sailors' Snug Harbor. It is on a portion of this land that Stewart built his up-town store. Adjoining was the farm of stout old Hendrick Brevoort, through whose homestead, between Broadway and the Bowery, the new Eleventh Street was planned to run. When the opening of this street became desirable, Mr. Brevoort resisted with so much of ancient Dutch stubbornness that the improvement was abandoned. An ordinance for the removal of the house was passed as late as 1849, but the venerable occupant refused to remove, and it was rescinded. In his palmy days, Mr. Tweed, the head of the Department of Public Works, was represented as sitting at his desk with a map of the city's most desirable street openings spread before him. In settling disputes as to candidates and offices, it was said that this renowned statesman would compromise matters beautifully by means of his map. As a sop to disappointed ambition he would remark: "No, I cannot let you go to Albany this winter, but here is something which is almost as good. You can have this street opening and make a good thing out of it." At one time Tweed determined to cut Eleventh Street through from Broadway to Fourth Avenue, or make Grace Church pay handsomely. The vestry thereupon met and challenged Tweed to go ahead. He never did. Trinity Parish, by the way, presented a silent argument against the proposition to cut Pine Street through the old church-yard. It built a monument to the unknown dead of the Continental Army who per-

ished in British prison pens in this city. The pedestal is all right, but the public have waited a long while for the "old Continental" in white marble, who was to stand under the brown-stone canopy and complete the picture.

The old farm-house of Henry Spingler—built originally by Elias Brevoort—stood within the limits of the present Union Square, and the twenty-two acres of the estate lay west of the Bowery Road. The latter road, then known as Bowery Lane, curved somewhat in passing the Square, and at Sixteenth Street turned and pursued a straight course to Bloomingdale. In order to join this course, the direction of Broadway was changed at Tenth Street, and a junction effected on the other side of the Square. One of the persons most actively engaged in the improvements connected with Union Square and its neighborhood was the late Samuel B. Ruggles, a resident and large property-holder in the vicinity. It was from this court-end of the city that Grace Church drew its large and wealthy congregation. For forty years that beautiful edifice has been the pride of all who loved Broadway, for it crowned magnificently its upper end, and stood sentinel above its Sunday stillness at a time when handsome church buildings were the exceptions to the rule. Its roll of membership was at one time, and no distant one, a roll of the most select society of which New York could boast. Its rector, Dr. Taylor, was not much of a pulpit orator, but he was a great social power, and its sexton, the immensely impressive Brown, was society's chief oracle. One by one the neighboring churches have migrated, and now Grace Church stands her ground almost alone, and yet with a full

congregation. The sons of the fathers follow in the path of their sires, and it is a good sign that it is so.

To me, as the city grows larger, busier, and more cosmopolitan, one of the things I most miss is the sound of the old familiar church bell. The city was drenched with silence on Sundays when I was a boy, and there was no sound to break the stillness except the clangor of the bells. At nine and at two they summoned us to Sunday-school; at half-past ten and at three they called the people to church. I suppose they ring as usual now, but the rumble of street-cars, the continual rush of other vehicles, the rattle and roar of the elevated lines, and all the modern combination of noises comes between their music and my ear, and sometimes the Sunday of my boyhood seems altogether lost. And this reminds me that New York, as well as Philadelphia, is owner of an historic bell. It was cast in Amsterdam in 1731, and it is said that many citizens cast in quantities of silver coin at the fusing of the metals. The bell was a legacy of Col. Abraham de Peyster, who died while the Middle Dutch Church, on Nassau Street, was building, and directed in his will that the bell should be procured from Holland at his expense. When the city was captured by the British, and the church was turned into a riding-school for the dragoons (Johnny Battin has told me often how he used to practise his troop there), the bell was taken down by the De Peyster family and secreted until shortly after the evacuation of the city, when it was restored to its original position. It never rang in honor of British oppression, but was patriotic to the core. When the church was sold to the Government for a post-office, the bell was removed to the church



THE MIDDLE DUTCH CHURCH

on Ninth Street, near Broadway, and thirty years ago, when the building changed hands, it found another resting-place in the church on Lafayette Place. Now it has made some other migration. But, of right, it should pass to a place of honor in the rooms of the Historical Society. A bell with such ancestry and history (and he who reads ancient Dutch may read its story in the inscription) deserves to be tenderly cherished by a city that has preserved too few of the mementos of its eventful story.

CHAPTER XIV

SUMMER BREEZES AT THE BATTERY—A SOLDIER OF THE LAST CENTURY —KNICKERBOCKERS AND THEIR HOMES—AN OLD-TIME STROLL UP BROADWAY

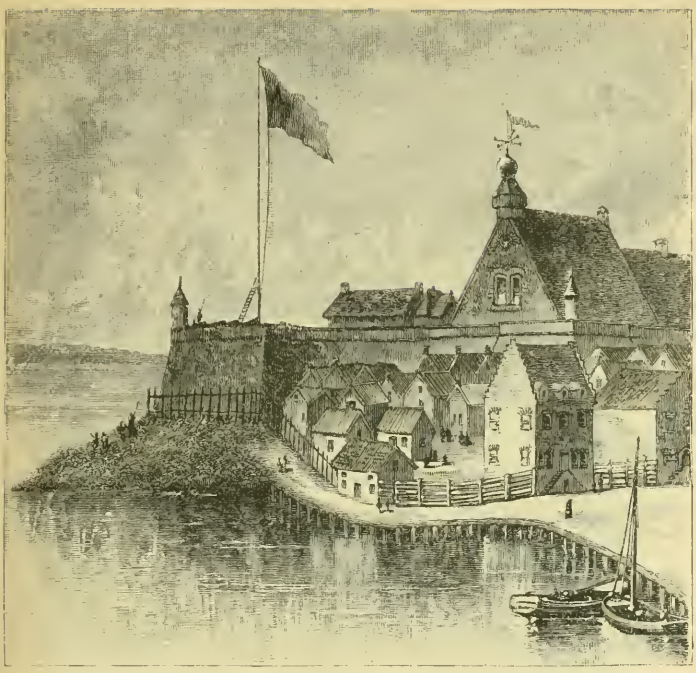
THE coolest spot in New York in the dog-days is the Battery Park. From some point in the compass a breeze is always blowing among its elms, and the electric lights bathe it in perpetual moonshine. Even on the most quiet of nights the swell of passing steamers makes a ripple of tinkling waters against its granite front, and there is no lack of pleasant companionship to those who recall the feet that in old times pressed its gravelled walks. Men whose hair is beginning to grow white recall the day when they looked up with pride, not unmingled with awe, to the old Knickerbockers who loved to walk here in the cool of the afternoon, and who showed the gentleness of their blood by always having a kindly word and the benediction of a touch of the hand upon the head for us who were children then. "'Who were the Knickerbockers,' you ask, Mrs. Fribble? No one, my dear madam, in whom you have the slightest interest."

Let us pass on.

I remember a dear old lady who loved to talk about this park, and tell of the people she had met here and the scenes she had witnessed; and of these, one man and one morning's adventure stood out most promi-

nent. A little thing in white, her nurse had brought her to the park to witness a civic anniversary, and the crowd prevented her from obtaining a good view of the pageant. As, with a child's impatience, she tried to press through the throng, a tall and handsome elderly gentleman, clad in a suit of black velvet and with a dress sword at his side, stooped down to her, inquired pleasantly about her trouble, and then lifted her upon his shoulder and held her there until the procession had passed. Delighted with what she saw, the child thought little about the gentleman who had brushed away her trouble, but thanked him when he released her with a kiss and set her down upon the ground. As he moved away, the nurse, in an awe-struck voice, asked the child if she knew whose arms had held her, and then told her that it was President Washington. The little eyes watched him as he walked quietly away, and never forgot his stately appearance. I think that dear old Mrs. Atterbury was more proud of having been the heroine of this incident than of all the social honors that afterwards fell to her lot.

At the Battery the ancient Dutch progenitors of the city of New Amsterdam laid the first foundations of a metropolis for the New World. But the pioneers from Holland were not unanimously of the opinion that it was wise to build their city at this point. A large number of them thought it would be more prudent to pitch their tents at Spuyten Duyvil; there they had found lovely meadow lands with running water, affording an excellent opportunity to dig and equip canals, and the sight was so shut in by adjacent hills as to be hidden from the eyes of foreign adventurers who might find entrance in the harbor below.



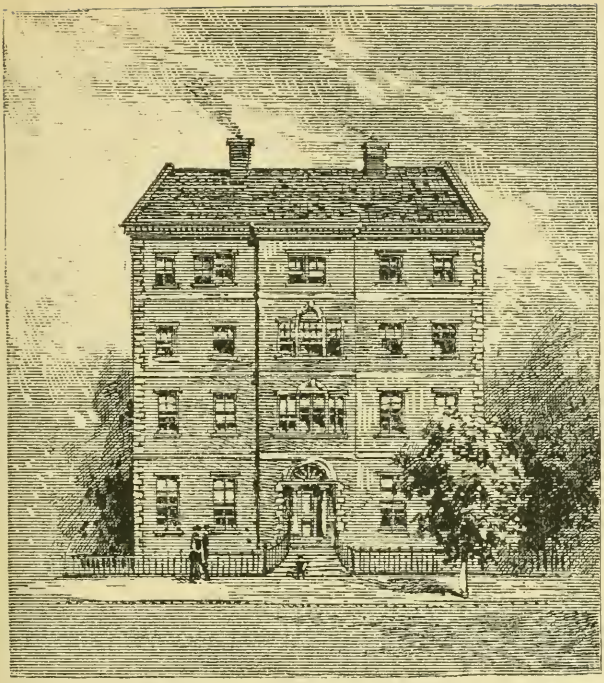
THE FORT AT THE BATTERY.

It was not the Indians whom the Dutch feared, but the English. These latter rapacious adventurers were then pushing their expeditions in all directions, and while it was feared that they might turn their guns upon the colony of the Dutch East India Company if it was located at the southern end of the island of the Manhadoes, it was believed that they would sail quietly away again if they found the place bearing the appearance of being uninhabited. These ideas nearly prevailed with the first settlers, but after an appeal to national pride, wiser counsels had their way, and it was resolved to begin operations at the point which is now

the Battery. All opposition was silenced as soon as it was demonstrated that a canal could be dug there at once, running through what is now Broad Street, and ending at the city wall, the present Wall Street. This at once lent the charm of home to the chosen site, and all was peace.

Sitting here, with every little wave of the harbor dancing in the sunlight just as it did forty years ago when I played under the elms, with no signs warning one to keep off the grass, I recall the Battery as I first knew it. The park was not then one-half its present size. There was no sea-wall. The tide rippled unchecked along the rocks and sand that made the beach. The walks were unkempt, and the benches were only rough wooden affairs. But the breeze, the fresh sea air, the whispering leaves, the orioles and bluebirds, and the shade were there, and to the boys of the period its attractions were Elysian. Castle Garden, then a frowning fortress still thought capable of service, was reached by a wooden bridge, and the salt-water lapped its massive foundations on all sides. The American Institute Fair was then held within its walls, and on these occasions the boys explored it from the flag-staff to the magazine, and held high carnival there.

A number of the Knickerbocker merchants and lawyers lived in the neighborhood of the Bowling Green and the Battery a generation ago. Stephen Whitney had his home on Bowling Green Place. Robert Goelet lived on State Street, and his brother Peter at No. 32 Broadway. The Rhinelanders had recently removed up-town to Washington Square, the Schermerhorns to Great Jones Street, and the Leroys to Lafayette Place, but a large number of the old families of the city still



THE OLD McCOMB MANSION

lingered around lower Broadway and the adjacent streets, and the Battery was always the terminus of their afternoon walk, whether they lived in its vicinity or as far up-town as the centre of fashion, at Bleecker and Bond streets. The day's parade of belles and beaux led past Trinity and to the old trysting-place, under the trees by the water-side.

Stephen Whitney, who was one of New York's few millionaires in his day, was a well-known character in the young metropolis. Had he lived a generation later, "Uncle Stephen," as all the young men called him, would have been a power in "the Street." As

it was, he knew enough to hold the money he had made, and his shrewdness was proverbial. When Stephen Whitney was buried from old Trinity, his was the last Knickerbocker house below Broadway. His house was closed, and the current of business buried it under the waves. The old man had dreamed that some day commerce would find it more convenient to occupy the upper end of the island, with Harlem River for a ship-canal and Long Island Sound for the entrance and exit of its fleet, and so the Battery would again be surrounded by comfortable homes and echo to the feet of the descendants of the people he had known. If his ghost ever walks in that direction, it must shiver while it anathematizes with voiceless fury the elevated railroad structure that defaces the park.

Was it yesterday that I sat on one of the benches in the old Battery Park and listened with rapt attention to Johnny Battin, as he told me of the scenes he had witnessed from that point when he was a young man and wore the red coat of King George. For "Johnny," as everybody called him, had been a cornet of horse in the British Army, and had served Lord Howe as bearer of despatches both to England and many a point in the colonies. He had known André, Burgoyne, Clinton, and all the British generals, had fought in the battles of Long Island and Fort Washington, and was the last survivor of those desperate encounters. A man of warm heart, his sympathies at last went over to the side of the colonists, and when peace was declared he made his home here, sought out a pretty Jersey girl for a wife, and made her a happy woman for five-and-sixty years. "Johnny" Battin was ninety-four years old when I was ten, and he lived to

be over one hundred years of age, and then went quietly to sleep like a little child. Until he had passed the century mile-post he never passed a day when he did not walk from his hosiery shop (he lived in the same building) in Greenwich Street, near Warren, to the Battery. I can see him now in the old-fashioned cut-away coat of drab, with knee-breeches and gray worsted stockings and low shoes with silver buckles, which he always wore. His hair was white and long, and gathered in a knot behind. There was a snow-white frill in his shirt, and his neckerchief was white also, and ample. In his hand he carried a substantial cane, which he scarcely needed even when he had long passed ninety, so erect was he and soldierly.

"Felix," said Johnny Battin, "I like to come here to the Battery, and think of all the changes I have seen hereabouts in the last seventy years. Yes, it was seventy years ago since I saw the British flag hoisted on the battery that stood back there by the Bowling Green. We camped up in East Broadway the night General Putnam evacuated these barracks and stole up along the Hudson to Fort Washington. That night a terrible fire broke out by the river-side here, and swept up Broadway, carrying away Trinity Church and nearly every other building as far as St. Paul's. It was a terrible conflagration, and lit up everything almost as clear as day. The houses were nearly all of wood, and by daybreak more than a third of the city was in ashes. The brick houses on Broadway, opposite the Bowling Green, were all that were left standing, and there Lord Howe made his head-quarters. They are fine houses still, with marble mantel-pieces, and huge mirrors, and great mahogany

doors. If you go into the second one some time they will show you the room that André occupied for his office when he was adjutant-general, and you will see a slit in the door into which I used to slip his despatches. I was sorry for André, but he knew what he was about, and took his chances. In the first house they used to have grand balls, and Lord Howe and

TRINITY CHURCH
The first edifice. Destroyed in the fire of 1776

Lord Percy and the rest of the noblemen who were fighting against your forefathers, my boy, held a sort of colonial court there which seemed to bewitch the royalist belles. Yes, and they were beautiful, very beautiful—but all dust and ashes now, my boy.

"After the war was ended they swept away the batteries—for there was more than one—and the barracks. Then they built a fine large mansion of brick where they had stood. It faced the Bowling Green, and looked up Broadway. The view from the windows was superb, for the ground was rising, and a long, low flight of steps led up to the main entrance. Washington was here then as President, and this was called the Government House, and was intended as his residence. But the Capitol was removed to Philadelphia, and then to Washington, and Washington never occupied our White House. For a few years it was used as a hospital, and then it was sold, and the block of brick houses was erected there, in one of which Mr. Whitney lives.

"It looks like a long way over to Staten Island, but I remember when the bay was frozen over solid from the Battery to what is now the Quarantine grounds. Our troops crossed over on the ice from Staten Island, and dragged their cannon with them. I carried the orders from Lord Howe, and it startled them, I can tell you; but they came through all right. Did your grandmother never tell you that she had crossed on the ice, too? Let me see; it was in the hard winter of 1780 when the troops marched over—a terrible winter, when many poor people starved or froze to death here, and it was thirty years later that the bay was frozen over solidly the second time. My wife went in a

sleigh to the Quarantine station, and she took your grandmother with her. When they reached Staten Island they found the snow was so deep that the people had carved a road out under an arch of snow. So many sleighs crossed that a man built a half-way house —just a shanty, you know—on the ice, and made quite a little sum by selling refreshments to the travellers.

RUINS OF TRINITY CHURCH

"I have seen a great many changes, my boy, in seventy long years, and I am more than ninety-four. But it has been a pleasant and a happy life, and its happiest part has been lived in my little home on Greenwich Street. It won't be long now before I am called to meet the King of kings, but you will live to see greater changes than any I have known. Love your country, boy, and love your home. It's an old man's advice and the secret of happiness."

I take Johnny Battin's hand as he rises, and we pass out of the wooden gate and up Broadway. He knows

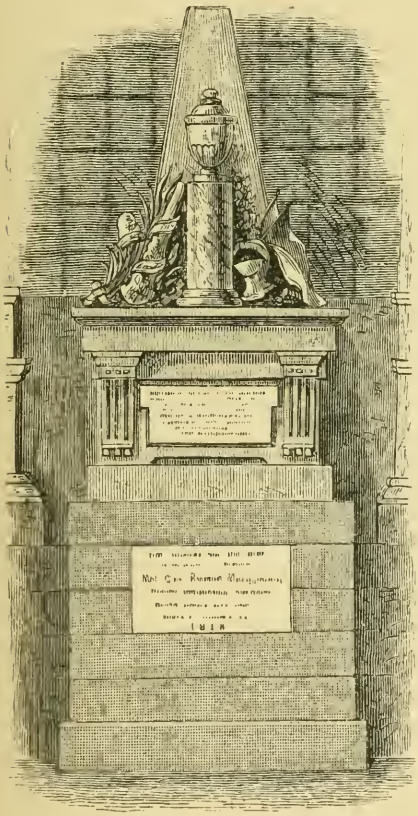
everybody that we meet, and all have a courteous word for him. Some of the great men of the day are on the promenade. Michael Hoffman, the Naval Officer, and Surveyor Elijah F. Purdy pass arm in arm, and I look up to them with awe as mighty politicians. Of "Corneel" and "Jake" Vanderbilt, who have a steamboat office at 34 Broadway, I have far less fear, for they live on Staten Island, and seem to be but ordinary men. Mayor Havemeyer is a fine-looking man, and walks briskly up to his residence on Vandam Street. Near the City Hotel, a great hostlery then, we pass "Tommy" Stanford, of the book-publishing firm of Stanford & Swords, on Broadway, near Cedar Street, and he stops to have a chat. A decidedly homely man, he has pleasant manners and a shrewd business look. He knows my father, and pats my head. As we leave him, Johnny Battin points to the old Dutch Church on Nassau Street, and tells me that he used it as a riding-school seventy years ago. It is a wonderful place to me, open from 8 A.M. to 7 P.M., and sending out its great Northern mail every afternoon at three, its great Eastern mail at the same hour, except on Sunday, and its Southern mail every night, and opening its doors on Sundays for an hour in the morning and afternoon.

When we pass St. Paul's Church the old British soldier takes off his three-cornered hat before the monument to Major-general Montgomery, and tells me of the pageant that marked the bringing back of the dead hero's body. "I have often seen President Washington come here to church," he says, "and he walked in very quietly, without any display, and when he was once in his pew he paid no attention to anything but his prayer-book and the clergyman." And then the

CITY HOTEL, BROADWAY. 1812

old man tells me of the church, as he saw it first in summer, surrounded by pleasant fields, and with nothing between its front porch and the river but a stretch of greensward; for. though St. Paul looks out upon Broadway from his lofty niche, the church itself turns its back upon that bustling thoroughfare. But I am more interested in his story of the suicide's grave that

lies directly under our feet. A son of a former rector of Trinity took his own life, and they would not bury him in the church-yard, but laid his poor, mutilated body at rest beneath the sidewalk, just outside of the church's gate. I will never forget this as I pass the spot, though ten thousand other feet pass lightly over the dead man's unconsecrated ashes.



MONUMENT TO GENERAL MONTGOMERY

A group of men stand on the front steps of the Astor House, and I look at them with a vast deal of reverence. It is currently reported among my school-mates that the guests at their granite hostelry, which rises high above all surrounding buildings with the sole exception of St. Paul's, have to pay one dollar a day for their entertainment. It is an enormous sum to expend for board and lodging, and my boyish mind

is lost in contemplation of the amount of luxurious ease which it is possible to purchase with such a price.

My little feet trot along in syncopated rhythm with the nonagenarian's slow pace as we leave Broadway and turn down Warren Street, and it seems almost a long enough journey to have afforded us a pretext for taking a Kipp & Brown stage. But Johnny is an old soldier, and it is a matter of daily duty with him to take his "constitutional." At last, however, we have reached Greenwich Street. There, in front of the modest little store, hangs a gigantic wooden stocking in glaring plaid coloring, and in the doorway stands Johnny Battin's son Joseph, who was the first of the city militiamen to grasp the hand of Lafayette when he landed at the Battery on his second visit to this country, and—

"Papa, what's the matter—are you dreaming?" It is my little twelve-year-old son who is tugging at my hand and calling to me, and we are standing at the foot of the stairs that lead up to the Warren Street station of the elevated railroad.

CHAPTER XV

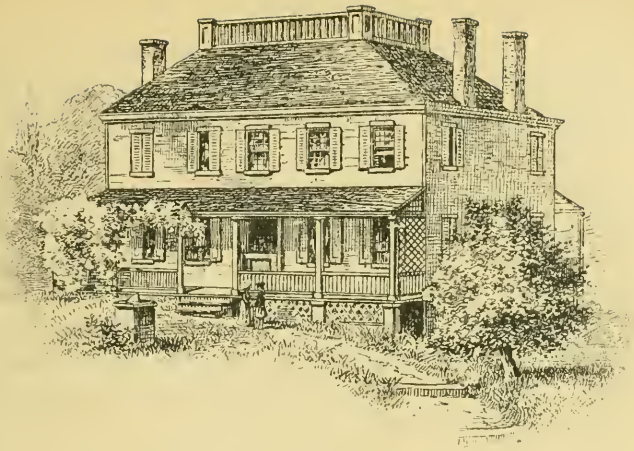
LIFE AT EIGHTY-SEVEN YEARS — MEMORIES OF ROBERT FULTON — WHAT THE FIRST STEAMBOAT LOOKED LIKE—SUNDAY IN GREENWICH VILLAGE — A PRIMITIVE CONGREGATION — FLIRTING IN THE GALLERIES

My friend the school trustee is eighty-seven years old in March. His hair is white and his frame is a little bent, but his cheek is still "like a rose in the snow," and his heart is as that of a little child. My little boy said to me once: "Papa, when grandpa gets to be real old, he will grow down and be as small as me, and then we can play together, can't we?" I do not know from what source the little child, who had not yet been graduated into trousers, had drawn the strange idea that as men grew older they grew down into childhood physically; but I have thought there was not a little of good philosophy in it, and the incident came back to me as I marked the bowed shoulders of my old friend, and noted how he was growing into a beautiful childhood spiritually. The late Horatio Seymour said to me, at the age of seventy, when his friends were urging him to allow his name to be used once again as a Presidential candidate, "I have only one thing to ask of the world now—to be allowed to grow old as gracefully as I can." Then he went on to speak of the reluctance that many showed to admit the march of time, and of his own eagerness to be

relegated to the rank of adviser, and be relieved from active duty.

As I write, there come back to me memories of that hospitable home on the Deerfield Hills, in which stood the clock that had ticked off the hours to Burgoyne when he was a captive in the Schuyler mansion, the favorite chair of Bishop White, and a hundred other historical relics of colonial and Revolutionary days; and I wonder if it will be amiss for me to say, apart from partisanship, and after close knowledge of many public men, that Horatio Seymour was the most complete Christian gentleman I ever knew? The pen that once pursued him bitterly in political life should be allowed to scratch this laurel on the rough bowlder that marks his grave.

My friend the school trustee was born in this city, on the eastern edge of what was then known as Greenwich Village. The house in which he was born stood on a hill not far from the lower end of Sixth Avenue, and it had no neighbors in sight except on the road that led up to the little hamlet on the banks of the Hudson, for which Admiral Sir Peter Warren had borrowed a name from England's home for veteran sailors when he set up his baronial mansion here. The family had just moved from their old homestead on Duane Street, near Chatham, and their friends deemed them crazy for going out into the wilderness to live. This house disappeared long since, but the frame dwelling to which my old friend brought his bride sixty years ago, and which he had erected, still stands in Jones Street, the oldest residence in the Ninth Ward. The house cannot tell its story, but it is like a revelation to talk with the white-haired pa-



SIR PETER WARREN'S HOUSE, GREENWICH VILLAGE

triarch who built it. He has seen Fulton and Aaron Burr, and talked with them; he remembers when the friction match, anthracite coal, and gas were introduced in this city; when the first stage began to run, and the first steamboat ploughed its slow way up the Hudson. He was a man of mature years at the time when the first locomotive ran out of New York, and the telegraph and the sewing-machine were invented and turned to practical use.

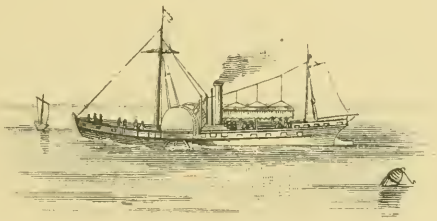
When first he began to go to school he walked with his sisters from their home in Greenwich Village to the old Dutch Reformed school, then situated in Nassau Street, opposite to the old Middle Dutch Church, the site of the present Mutual Life Insurance Company's building. Their long walk led them across Minetta Brook and down by Burr's Pond (on his Richmond Hill estate), into which the brook flowed, through the thick woods that extended from Macdougal and

Downing streets, and thence out into the cornfields and meadows that stretched down to Canal Street. It was only when they had crossed the bridge there that they had reached the suburbs of the city. In all their long walk they had to make but one turn, out of Broadway into Liberty Street. It was a journey that would have appalled the school-child of to-day. But there were no conveniences of suburban travel at that time. A stage made a daily trip from Greenwich Village to John Street and back every week-day, to accommodate business men who lived out of town, but the fare was two shillings each way, and that was entirely too great a price to pay for education.

When a boy of eight, my patriarchal friend saw Fulton's steamboat, the *Clermont*, pass Greenwich Village in making her first trip up the Hudson. Everybody had heard of this apparently foolhardy undertaking, and all were on the watch for a glimpse of "Fulton's folly." The school-children were wild with excitement, and when news came that the boat was in sight, they ran down to a high bluff that stood at the foot of Morton Street and cheered it as it passed. "What did it look like?" I asked. The old man chuckled. "I told people afterwards," he said, "that it was as big as a barn and a block long, and horrible to behold; and they believed it, too. But in reality it looked like a big scow, with unprotected paddles in the centre, and a walking-beam and other machinery half exposed to view. It was a very primitive affair, and did not move very fast; but to us it was a wonder then, as it went without sails." Then he went on to tell me that he had often seen Robert Fulton afterwards in the shop in which he had learned his trade, and where the

great inventor was overseeing the manufacture of machinery for the steam-frigate which he had planned for the defence of New York. The frigate was a species of floating battery, which proved to be impracticable, yet it was the seed idea of monitors and turreted ships, and did not ripen because its growth was premature. Fulton heard nothing while in the shop, and saw nothing. With eye and mind intent on the machinery or plans before him, he would not break away unless some one put a hand on his shoulder and called him back by a touch.

Two of the company on Fulton's first steamboat voyage down the Hudson have but lately passed to the other side of the sea of time. Dr. William Perry,



THE CLERMONT

who lived at Exeter, New Hampshire, and who survived his ninety-eighth birthday, rode from Albany to Kingston on the return trip of the steamboat, and had a vivid remembrance of the incidents of that eventful voyage. He declared that the name of the boat was not the *Clermont*, as has been generally accepted, but *Katharine of Claremont*, so called in honor of Fulton's wife, who was a daughter of Chancellor Livingston, and her family, to whose liberality he owed the money

to carry out his idea of a vessel propelled by steam. The last surviving passenger on this famous voyage was Col. George L. Perkins, of Norwich, Conn., who, until his century-mark, continued in service as active treasurer of the Norwich and Worcester Railroad Company.

There is an old-fashioned Methodist Episcopal church at the corner of Bedford and Morton streets, at whose side I remember that long ago a quiet little burying-ground stretched. These serene and silent settlements of the dead have always had a strange fascination for me. Especially is this true of the half-forgotten nooks in old city by-ways where the men and women of a former generation sleep—those about whose lives hang the romance of the days before I was born. I never pass the greensward that softly roofs them in from our eyes but I wish that I could question them concerning the days in which they lived. Some one had told me that a half-century ago, when a smaller church building occupied the site at Morton and Bedford streets, the burial-ground was more extensive, and I remembered that at one time it was more conspicuous, so I went to my old friend, whose memory I knew to be wonderfully bright, and asked him how far back he could recall this old-time sanctuary of the disciples of John Wesley. His eyes twinkled triumphantly as he replied: "Why, I remember when it was built. I attended with my mother the first Methodist meetings held here. We belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church at the corner of Bleecker and West Tenth streets — it was Herring and Amos streets then — but we got drawn into the carpenter-shop that was the cradle of Methodism here, and,

praise the Lord, I have been in the way ever since." It was the story of a city church that he told me then, and this was also a story of the city's growth, though with this difference, that, unlike many another congregation, the people of old Bedford Street Church still hold the fort, and are as strong as they were half a century ago. I saw the church filled in the storm of a late Sunday night, and the altar railing occupied by nearly a score of penitents. And up from all corners of the church rang the triumphant notes of the old hymns with which Charles Wesley sang into the Kingdom of his Master and theirs a multitude whom no man can number.

The first meetings of the Methodists of Greenwich Village were held at the house of Samuel Walgrove, on the north side of Morton Street, not far from Bleecker. Thence they were transferred to his carpenter-shop, whose first floor was carefully swept on Saturday afternoons, and arranged with benches of rough lumber, so as to accommodate from fifty to sixty persons. This was in 1808. It did not take long for this zealous little congregation to outgrow its limits and demand more room. Five lots were purchased at the corner of Bedford and Morton streets for $250 each, and there a church was built in 1810. It was a plain edifice, without steeple, blinds, or ornament; its sides were shingled, and it was painted the color of cream. Two separate entrances led into the two aisles—one for males and the other for females. The sexes were kept rigidly apart for years. "Yes," said my aged informant, "we had a hard time keeping the boys and girls apart after the galleries were built, but we did it for a while. They could only sit and

wink and blush at each other." And then he laughed softly to himself, as if memory had brought back summer days when the corn could be seen waving outside of the windows of the old shingled church, and the bluebirds and robins were twittering in the willows, and the eye would wander, in spite of the conscience, to the opposite row of benches, where, demure and sweet, with dimples struggling up to the corners of the mouth and flushes of pink lighting up the severely simple Sunday bonnet, sat the dearest girl in all the world. An old story? Yes, it was an old story even then. But ask your grandson if it is not new.

The pulpit was a lofty, pepper-box structure, that subsequently went with the high-backed pews and other furniture to decorate the interior of a church for colored people on West Fifteenth Street, when, in 1830, the old building was enlarged by an addition of six feet on the front and fourteen feet on one of the sides, which made a singular exterior and decidedly queer interior. Outside, Nature made some amends, through a row of poplars on the Morton Street side and two comely willows on Bedford Street. But inside all was bare and hard except around the altar space, which was carpeted. This, together with the placing of blinds at the pulpit windows, was an innovation that was stoutly resisted. It was inveighed against by the elders of the congregation as yielding to the pomps and vanities of the world. But the church prospered. John Newland Maffit, the famous revivalist, held wonderful gatherings in the old meeting-house (no one called it a church then), and in 1840 its membership of nine hundred had outgrown its former accommodations, and the present comfortable and

commodious edifice was built, which still holds its own in the old Ninth Ward. Under the old church had been a cellar in which cider was stored; under the new the space was turned to better account in class-rooms and an ample lecture-room, where the old railing, at which so many thousands of converts had knelt in the days of Maffit and Rice, stands as a monument to past simplicity and power; for there was power there from the first, and "the shout of a king was among them." An old gentleman of eighty-one, who used sometimes to walk up to this church from his home in Vesey Street through the swamps and meadows above Canal Street, that then were filled with snipe and woodcock from the Jersey shore, and who liked to stop and drink at a beautiful spring under some chestnut-trees in the fields south of Morton Street, said to me: "They used to call this the shouting church, and I often saw the men sitting in the pews in their shirt-sleeves and shouting as if they were wild."

It was in 1841 that the steamship *President* sailed from New York, never to return. Among her passengers was the Rev. Mr. Cookman, father of the late Rev. John E. Cookman, D.D., pastor of the Bedford Street Church, and of the Rev. Alfred Cookman, famed in Methodist annals as a leader in the spiritual Israel. Pastor and people in the old Greenwich Village congregation are suited to each other, and work in wonderful unison. The church that has seen eighty winters pass over its head, and that has kept on growing all that time, is likely to breast successfully the storms of centuries to come. So may it be.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE EAST SIDE—THE OLD SHIPPING MERCHANTS—JACOB LEISLER—A PARADISE OF CHURCHES—THE DOMINIE'S GARDEN—MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SANITY OF OLD NEW YORK

"WHAT is the matter with the east side?" writes a friend, whose family homestead was once on Pearl Street.

To which I make answer by turning the steps of the tourist to a quarter of the city that was the earliest business centre, and that held the homes of the wealthier colonists, at a time when the splendors of the old Walton House were quoted in the British Parliament as an incentive to the tax-gatherer. Yet there are some recollections which sadden me as I take my way up the water-front of the East River. In my boyhood the wharves were filled with clipper ships and packets that bore the flag of the Union, and further up were great ship-yards where we school-boys went to see the great vessels launched. I am enough of a free-trader to be at war with the dog-in-the-manger policy of our Government which forbids our merchants on the one hand to go into the open market and purchase ships built in other lands, and on the other hand retains the heavy war taxes on material which prevents them from entering into competition with foreign shipwrights. My uncles were shipping merchants in South Street, near Wall (above the door I

IN BROAD STREET

can still read the faded lettering of the sign), who were compelled to sell their ships when Confederate cruisers began their depredations. The ghost of our lost commercial marine haunts my steps as I pass by.

The east side from the earliest time was the cradle of mercantile life. The old Dutch founders of the city settled it by locating their canal on Broad Street and anchoring their vessels in the East River, on whose banks their primitive wharves and storehouses were built. There is not a street between the Battery and the City Hall Park which is not redolent with the romance of the old merchants of the metropolis. They were a social power in colonial days, a political power in the years that saw the struggle for independence, a progressive power in the building up of the young republic. To write their story would be to give the history of the rise and prosperity of the city. Yet their social, business, and domestic life in the earlier part of this century is a theme to tempt sorely the saunterer's pen.

I remember when a boy frequently visiting the store of Valentine & Bartholomew, on Front Street, in which one of my uncles was the youngest clerk. It was a dingy place. The front was filled with coffee and sugar in bags and barrels, and in the rear was a bare, bleak office, containing high desks with spindle legs, wooden stools and chairs, and neither carpet nor anything else approaching luxury. In winter a small fire of Liverpool coal made a dismal attempt to heat the atmosphere. It was a fair type of the offices of the period. As for the clerks, they were expected to work early and late. The junior clerk had to be on hand by seven o'clock to admit the porter, and help

NO. 2 BROADWAY, 1798

him sweep and set things to rights. The modern clerk would think himself insulted if set to such tasks. Yet out of just such work our great merchants were moulded. In the case above quoted the junior clerk was president of a bank in Wall Street at thirty years of age.

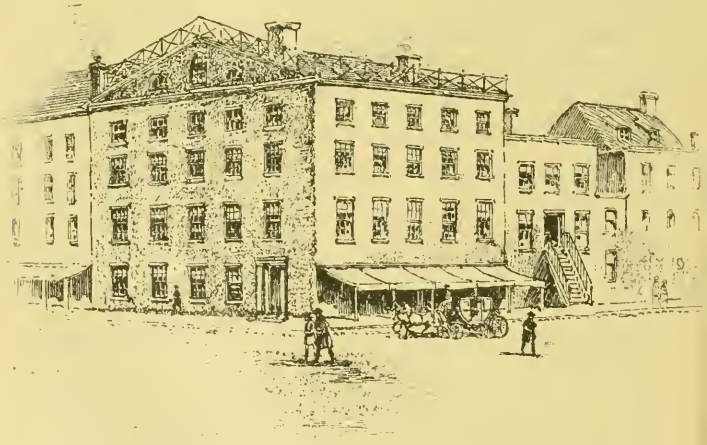
It would not do, in those days, to judge of the prosperity of a firm by its surroundings. A story told me by Jehiel Post, many years ago, illustrates this aptly. His father and uncle were in business in William Street, and their office and store (in which they kept only samples) were as bare and comfortless as an empty barn. It happened that a country merchant had received a note of theirs in course of trade, and as he was in the city he thought it would do

no harm to look them up and find how they stood. On entering the store he was astonished to find their stock apparently very low, and everything bearing the appearance of a lack of trade. Beginning to grow alarmed, he entered the back office, and was still more disheartened by its appearance of poverty. At last he mustered courage to remark that he held a note of the firm. "Very well," answered the senior Jehiel, "it will be paid when due." But this did not satisfy the countryman, and he ventured to inquire if the firm would not discount the note. "We don't do business that way," was the cold reply. "But, gentlemen," stammered the man, "I'll take off 10 per cent. for cash—yes," with a burst of terror, "I'll take off twenty." "Brother Jehiel, do you hear that?" whispered the other partner; "let's take him up." The bargain was made and the money paid down. "Now," said one of the brothers, "if you please, tell us the meaning of this strange transaction." The countryman made his confession, and the brothers roared. They were vastly more tickled by the joke than by the profit. Calling one of their clerks, they sent him around with the visitor to the bank where the note was to be paid, and there the latter was informed by the cashier that he would cash the check of the firm any day for $50,000.

To men who take a pride in New York as their own city there is a historic charm about this old mercantile camping-ground on the east side. There is scarcely a street which has not its patriotic legend. The old tavern of Sam Fraunce, in which Washington took leave of his officers at the close of the war, is still standing at Broad and Pearl streets. At the De

Peyster House, on Pearl Street, opposite Cedar, the general had his headquarters. On Wall Street he was inaugurated President. Through these streets the Liberty Boys paraded. Here they seized a load of muskets from their red-coated guardians; there they threw into the street the types of the loyalist printer, Rivington. Francis Lewis, a merchant doing business on Dock Street, and Philip Livingston, whose store was at the corner of Water Street and Maiden Lane, were signers of the Declaration of Independence.

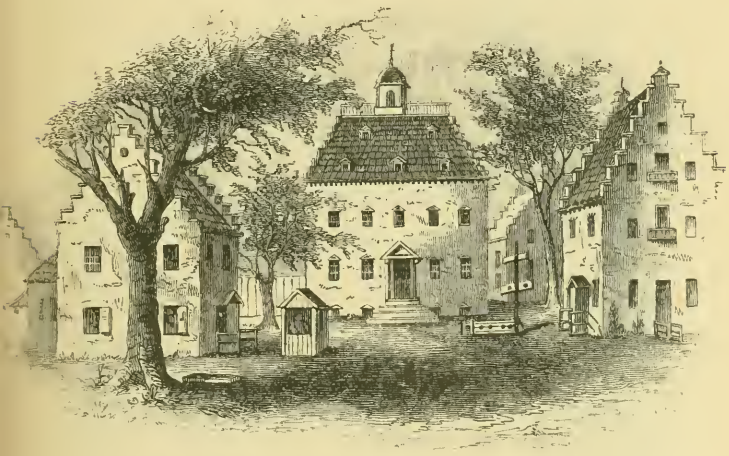
It is a good many years since I noticed on the wall of the Senate Chamber in the old Capitol at Albany a



FRAUNCE'S TAVERN, BROAD AND PEARL STREETS

portrait of Jacob Leisler. A wealthy shipping merchant of New York, he was the city's first martyr to constitutional liberty. Called by the Committee of

Safety and the people to fill the interregnum occasioned by the accession of William and Mary, his short term of office, from 1689 to 1691, was the heroic age of the young colony. At his summons, in May, 1690, the first Continental Congress assembled in the old Stadt Huys, on Coenties Slip, where the colonies



THE STADT HUYS

of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Plymouth, and Maryland were represented. New Jersey sent her sympathies, and the Philadelphia Quakers wrote that it was "ag't their princ'ls" to fight. But this sturdy little Congress was full of martial zeal, and voted to raise a grand army of 850 men to invade Canada and wipe out the French. The people stood by Leisler; the aristocrats, led by Col. Nicholas Bayard, opposed him. Finally a new Governor came from England, Colonel Sloughter, and Leisler was de-

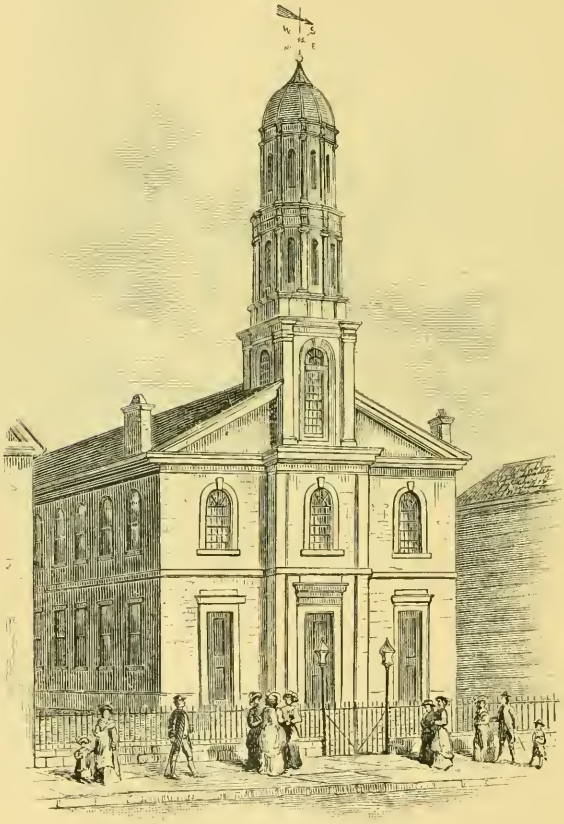
posed, tried, and condemned to hang for treason. It was a travesty of justice, and Sloughter could be induced to sign the death-warrant only after a wine supper at the fort. The next morning, in a drenching rain, Leisler was led forth to execution. The place selected was on his own grounds, on Park Row, east of the Post-office, in full view of his home. The people shouted and groaned, but the law prevailed, and they had to content themselves with tenderly conveying the corpse of the martyr to a quiet grave in his own garden, near at hand. Two months later Colonel Sloughter died suddenly, and was buried in the Stuyvesant vault, near the chapel which is now St. Mark's Church; four years afterwards the taint of treason was by royal proclamation removed from the name and fame of Jacob Leisler.

The lower east side early became the paradise of churches. The Dutch Reformed had the South Church, on Exchange Place; Middle Church, on Nassau Street, where the Mutual Life Building now stands; and North Church, at Fulton and William streets, where the noon-day prayer-meeting still commemorates its site. These were large, substantial structures, each with its graveyard at the side, dotted with ancient tombstones. The Presbyterians built their first church on Wall Street, where it stood for more than a century. Jonathan Edwards was once its pastor. Their second congregation erected the old "Brick Church" upon the triangular lot bounded by Park Row, Beekman, and Nassau streets, and known as "The Vineyard." I remember the edifice well. It was an architectural horror. But no man was more revered than its pastor, Dr. Gardner Spring, though

NORTH DUTCH CHURCH, FULTON STREET

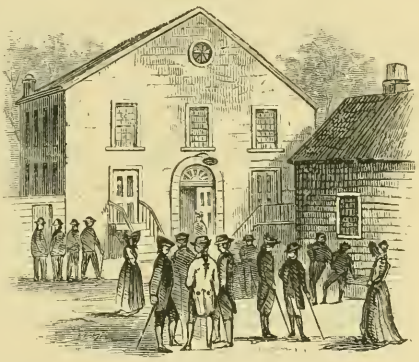
he was not a particularly attractive preacher. Another Presbyterian church stood on Cedar Street, and a fourth on Rutgers Street. Theologically the denomination was a power. Drs. Rogers, McKnight, Milledollar, Romeyn, and Samuel Miller were men of wonderful strength in the pulpit, as were also Dr. Mason,

of the Scotch Presbyterian Church in Cedar Street, and Dr. McLeod, of the Covenanters' Church, in Chambers Street. Drs. Miller and Mason were the intellectual leaders of the New York pulpit in their day, their only rival being Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Hobart. It



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WALL STREET

used to be said of Dr. Livingstone, of the Dutch Church, and Bishop Provoost, of the Episcopal, that "when they met on Sunday and exchanged salutations, they took up the entire street, and reminded beholders of two frigates under full sail, exchanging salutes with each other."



METHODIST CHURCH, JOHN STREET

In the Methodist chapel, on John Street, still occupied for worship, Whitefield used to "preach like a lion." The Methodists had other churches on Forsyth and Duane streets. Baptist "meeting-houses" were erected on Gold, Oliver, and Rose streets before this century had opened, and were flourishing. The Lutherans built their first church at the corner of William and Frankfort streets, and the German Reformed people were housed on Nassau, near John Street. The pastors of these churches, Drs. Kunze and Grose, were among the group that stood back of President Washington when he took the oath of office. The Moravians had a church on Fulton Street, near William. The Quakers had a meeting-house and burying-ground on Little Queen Street, between Maiden Lane and Liberty Street, and the Jews built their first synagogue on Mill Street—a thorough-

fare now blotted out by the march of improvement. Their old burial-plot remains, however. When they purchased it their idea was to seek a sepulchre far away from the living and their haunts, so in 1729 they purchased ground east of what is now Chatham Square, between James and Oliver streets. Part of the greensward and some of the headstones carved with Hebrew characters still remain, walled in on all sides but one by the high walls of tenement-houses.

There were two Episcopal churches east of Broadway when the century was in its teens. One was Christ Church, on Ann Street, afterwards transferred to Anthony, now Worth Street; the other was St. George's Church, on Beekman Street. The latter was a stately stone edifice, in which I have often heard Dr. Milnor, the rector, preach. Once a Congressman from Pennsylvania, the doctor was as successful in the ministry as he had been in politics. In Zion Church, on Mott Street (now the Roman Catholic Church of the Transfiguration), I have also attended services when Dr. Richard Cox was rector. He had been a Wall Street broker, and, like General Butler, was "cross-eyed" as well as eloquent. Zion Church had been a Lutheran conventicle until 1804, when it transferred its allegiance to the Episcopal *ordo*. About the same time, also, the old French Huguenot congregation on Pine Street conformed to the apostolic succession. With a minister and a church on Marketfield Street as early as 1687, they started a burying-ground ten years later,

LUTHERAN CHURCH
William and Frankfort Streets

THE BRICK CHURCH, PARK ROW

"far out of town," bounded by Pine, Cedar, and Nassau streets. Here in 1704 they built a quaint stone church, fronting on Pine Street, which stood until about sixty years ago. Its last Huguenot preacher was a queer little man, of unimpeachable learning and dulness, who modelled his sermons exactly after the pattern laid down in *Claude's Essay on Preaching*. Usually he preached in French, but when he resorted to English the effect was irresistible. He always announced in turn each division of his sermon, saying gravely: "Now we have de oration," or, "Now we have de peroration." But his masterpiece of effectiveness was exhibited when, with a befittingly solemn face, he gave out the thrilling announcement, "And now, my friends, we come to de pa-tet-ic."

It is creditable to the religious spirit of the Knickerbocker founders of New York that, without making any proclamation of their piety, they tolerated all sects, and established here, what the Puritans did not leave "unstained" in Plymouth colony, "freedom to worship God." Roger Williams and Mrs. Anne Hutchinson found a refuge here from persecution. Governor Keift ransomed the Jesuit Fathers Jogues and Bressani from the Indians, and gave them free transport to Europe. Jews were admitted to citizenship on their petition in 1657. When the witchcraft delusion was at its height in New England, the New York clergy met and resolved that "a good name obtained by a good life should not be lost by mere spectral accusation." At a time when the religious people of Wethersfield, Conn., were bent upon praising God by hanging a poor widow, the latter found hospitable refuge in Westchester, and when some of the timid

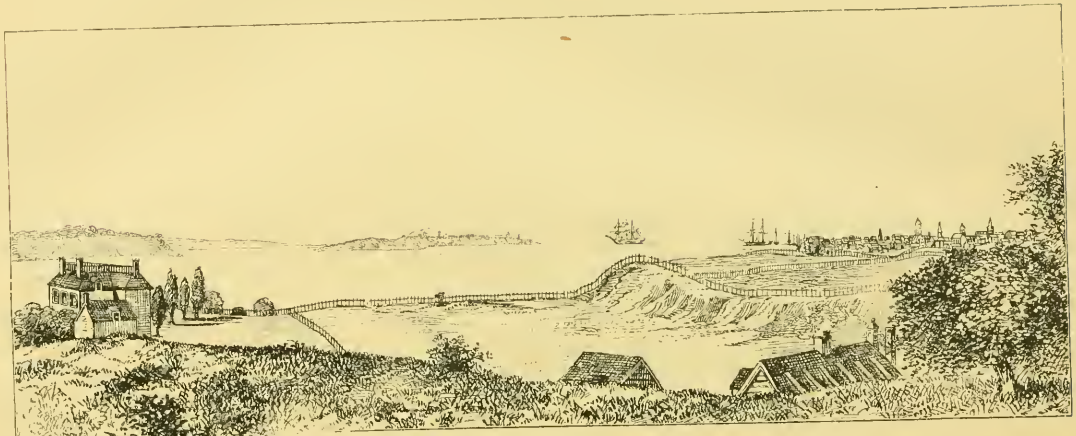
politicians of that day demanded her banishment, the Court of Assizes held in this city ordered that she "remaine in the Town of Westchester, or elsewhere in the Government during her pleasure." Thus, with even balance, did the men who built this city discharge their duty to God and man. And when churches had multiplied on the east side, and denominations had grown rich and powerful, there was still no clashing of theological strife. An upright, liberal people, invincible in honesty and enterprise, the old New Yorkers were unconsciously a model for their times.

But did I not begin to say something about the old merchants of the city, and then branch off into the churches? What with finding a brand-new park down by the water-side, in the busiest and oldest haunts of commerce, and being greeted at every turn by the ghosts of departed churches and rifled burying-grounds, to say nothing of the spectre of our slaughtered shipping, I have let the old men of business renown slip by. Let us call the roll of the great merchants of forty years ago, and how many will answer? It is a roster of the dead. As to their ways of dealing, their social pleasures, their habits, and their homes, we have changed all that, as Molière's quack doctor remarks—but is it for the better?

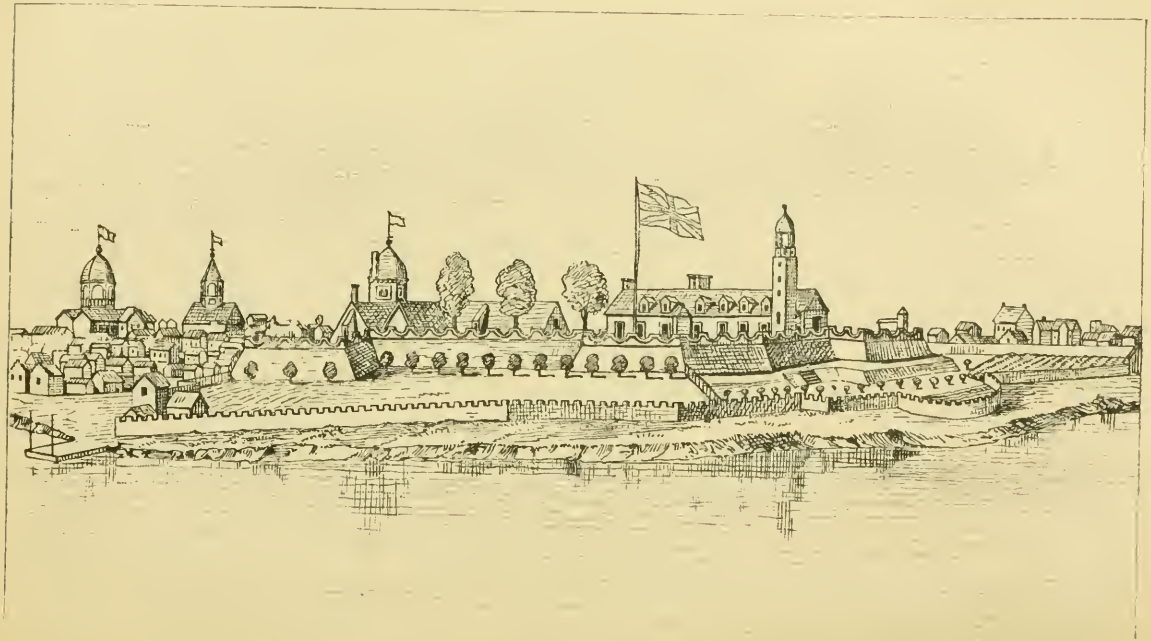
CHAPTER XVII

WHEN HARLEM WAS A VILLAGE — FISHING FOR FLOUNDERS — THE CANAL MANIA—AN ANCIENT TOLL-BRIDGE—TWENTY YEARS AFTER —MOTT'S CANAL AND HIS HAVEN

A FRIEND, who is twenty years my senior, and whose life has been crowned with high civic honors, delights to tell of a stolen day spent on the forbidden banks of Stuyvesant's Creek, near the foot of Fourth Street and the East River, and of the parental vengeance that overtook him the next day, when his mother discovered under his pillow a huge eel, which, with a fisherman's pride, he could not bear to part with, and yet, as a trespasser in forbidden paths, he had not dared to exhibit. He recalls with a sigh the pleasure which that nibble afforded him on a summer day sixty years ago, and in the same way I look back with envy on a long day in June that has impressed on my memory a vivid picture of the quiet village of Harlem as I first saw it—a placid hamlet embowered in trees, set off on either side by the thick woods that crowned the heights beyond McGowan's Pass and the elevation on the Westchester side known as Buena Ridge, and by the silver line of Harlem River and the East River waters, dotted with islands, that were broadening into the Sound. The old Dutch settlement, almost coeval with the metropolis, was a synonyme of repose. Physicians commended it as a place inaccessible to care.



VIEW OF NEW YORK FROM THE NORTH-EAST



VIEW OF NEW YORK FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

There, it was rumored, natives and aliens alike slept twenty hours out of the twenty-four; but this may have been slander.

But let me begin at the beginning. A chum of mine, whose final name was Smith (this was his name, in fact, and I stand ready to prove that the Smith family has ancient and honorable lineage, and that one of the high and mighty Schepens of New Amsterdam bore the name of Smith in the Holland vernacular), entered into a conspiracy with me to play hookey. We longed for the country; we wanted to catch some flounders; we had saved up sundry shillings which were burning holes in our pockets, and we were perfectly agreed that we could enjoy ourselves in no way so well as in stealing a day from school. Our plans were laid in secrecy, and it nearly killed us, I remember, to keep the conspiracy to ourselves, so proud did we feel of our boyish boldness. The day we had fixed upon came slowly, but it dawned gloriously, and at the hour when Trinity School was opening with prayer, two of its promising pupils were racing towards the Bowery to catch the stage which left the City Hall at nine o'clock for Harlem. What a ride that was! Up beyond the junction of the Bowery with Fourth Avenue all traces of business were left behind. The houses began to stand apart, gardens sprang up and blossomed between, with odor of roses and honeysuckles, clusters of trees became frequent as we emerged into the old Boston Road, and when we had passed Twenty-third Street we were fairly in the country. At the left rose the gray walls of the great reservoir at Forty-second Street, conspicuous among scattered villas; at the right the East River

kept flashing into view between patches of forest trees and beyond rolling meadows.

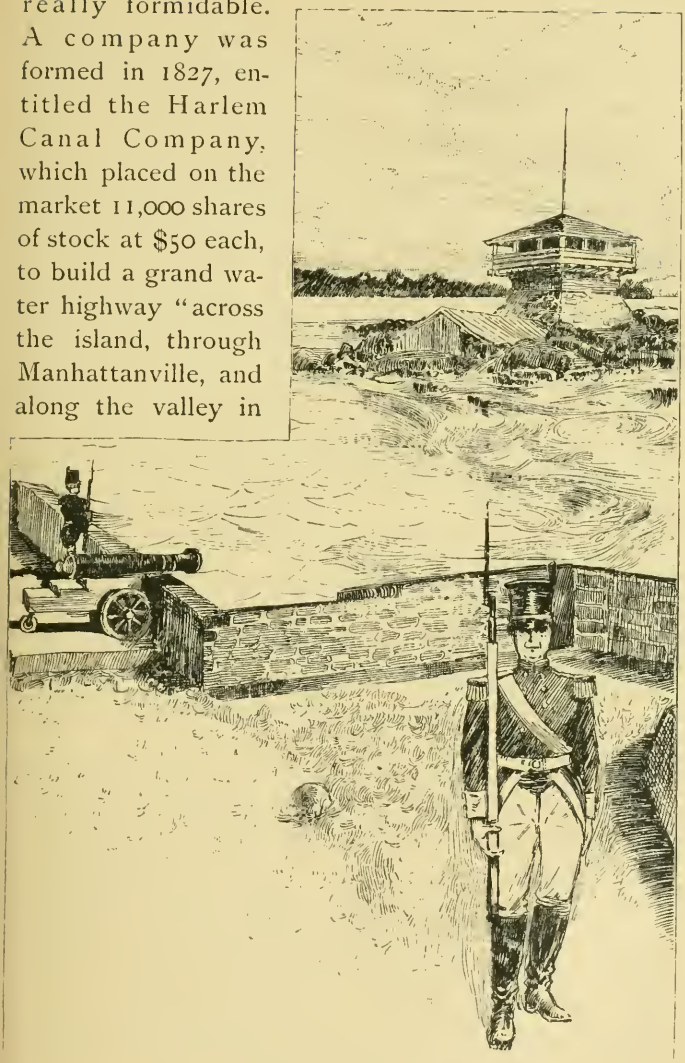
Yorkville was a somewhat scattered hamlet, possessing several churches, a number of small stores, and a large and varied assortment of residences. It was never very attractive to the eye. But the view towards the East River was superb. The handsome residences on the Long Island shore were conspicuous then, as were also many fine old-fashioned houses on this side, which had been in possession of old New York families for generations. As a boy I had a special interest in the fortifications of 1812, which had once stretched transversely across the island from the vicinity of Hell Gate, and of which the remains were then visible at many points. Between Yorkville and Harlem Village, on the line of the Boston Road, there were very few houses, and none of special importance except an ancient hostlery, at which we did not stop. It seems incredible that time should have made such changes in little more than a generation, and built up a city in solid strength through five miles of what was then only rural scenery; but—*eccc signum!* the city is there. The fields have been swallowed up. Villas have disappeared as did Aladdin's palace.

When we got to the canal at One Hundred and Tenth Street, we two truants, simultaneously animated by a desire to explore this marvel, pulled the strap of the stage, paid the driver a shilling each, and descended, glad of the chance to stretch our weary limbs again. The canal was filled up some years ago, and its site is covered by houses, which must necessarily be rather damp in the cellar. At that time it extended from the East River nearly to the Fifth

Avenue line. In part it followed the line of Harlem Creek, a tributary to the river of that name at its mouth, and was solidly built of stone, with handsomely constructed locks. But it was a failure. Every once in a while the canal mania seems to have seized upon New York. It came naturally to the Dutch founders of New Amsterdam. They would have been unhappy without a canal. At one time they contemplated building a whole net-work of water highways in the sweetly swampy region of Spuyten Duyvil Creek and Mosholu Brook, a locality which always reminded them tenderly of the fatherland. But they contented themselves with the construction of the canal to which Broad Street owes its width, and which enabled the market-men from the Long Island shores to run their craft up as far as Wall Street. There, on the bridges that crossed that municipal ditch, the Dutch burgher smoked his pipe in the early twilight, leaning on the railing and thinking half regretfully of his old home. There, a little later, Katrina looked down into the placid water that reflected nothing prettier than her face, which glowed with tenderness at her ardent swain's repetition of the old, old story, which every strong man's heart thinks to be his own special discovery.

At a later day capital had an idea of traversing the young city with a canal which should extend from Beekman Swamp to the Collect Pond, and thence, by the western outlet of that body of water, through Canal Street to the North River. It proved to be too large a scheme to handle, however, and, after being discussed for years, was dropped. But the movement which led to the construction of the Harlem Canal was

really formidable. A company was formed in 1827, entitled the Harlem Canal Company, which placed on the market 11,000 shares of stock at $50 each, to build a grand water highway "across the island, through Manhattanville, and along the valley in



MILL ROCK FORT

the vicinity of the North and East rivers." The canal was to be sixty feet in width, walled with stone on each side, with a street fifty feet wide on each side, and three miles in length. I have been curious enough to look up the dazzling prospectus of this company, from which I quote; and in reading it I am afraid it was slightly suggestive of speculation. Professor Renwick, of Columbia College (with what respect the generation of Oldboys remember him!), was quoted as computing that the canal would furnish one hundred and seventy horse-power to those who desired to avail themselves of it. The company's representatives in 1827 went into a prophecy of population, which was not fulfilled as they expected. The population of the city having been 33,131 in 1790, and 166,085 in 1825, and being estimated at 200,000 in 1827, they predicted that it would be doubled every fifteen years, and would reach 800,000 in 1857, at which time a "dense population" would cover Harlem plains. A curious feature of the programme was the offer of forty buildings and lots to be drawn in a lottery by the subscribers. Dazzling as was the prospectus, the project failed. Now, at a later day, with the population on the ground, the Federal Government comes to the front to carry out in the proposed ship-canal through Harlem River and Spuyten Duyvil Creek the old idea which started at the Collect Pond, and afterwards laid foundations in Harlem Creek. When the great ship-canal is finally ready for dedication, the spirits of the Dutch founders of New York, who, when they were safely landed on Manhattan, first gave thanks to God, and then went to hunt for a place to dig a canal, may confidently be invoked to be present.

But it is time the two runaways left the canal, where they threw in their lines, but got no bite, and turned their faces towards Harlem. Forty years ago the village was compact, clustered down close to the river, well shaded with trees, most charmingly rural, and apparently impervious to change. Cows were grazing in St. Andrew's church-yard, and there was more of the same style of four-footed worshippers in the yard around the old Dutch Church. Yet it all looked natural; and the pigs in the street were taken as a matter of course, for even New York had not then entirely triumphed in her crusade against peripatetic porkers. Altogether, it is a pleasant remembrance which I have of ancient Harlem, even down to the remarkable old hotel at the river's edge, just west of the bridge, where we went to hire a boat for fishing, and rented one for half a day for a shilling. We didn't cross the bridge; it had no charms for us. I don't believe it had charms for any one. It was a toll-bridge; but I never felt entirely safe in trusting my life to it. I never remember it to have been anything but a ruin, moss-grown and shaky, yet it is not twenty years since it was removed. At the time of which I write it was in keeping with the landscape. Beyond the river few houses were visible. The land belonged to the Morris family. The old homestead of Gouverneur Morris, builder of the Constitution, friend of Washington, diplomatist and Senator, stood near the mouth of Harlem River, with its chimneys just visible above the trees. Not far away was the rural residence of Lewis Morris, signer of the Declaration of Independence, and just beyond rose the spire of the church the family had erected, and beneath

which their dead repose—St. Ann's Church, Morrisania. And up from the bridge stretched the old Boston Road, rich in historic associations.

It was in the autumn of 1865 that I next fished for flounders at the mouth of the Harlem River, and through all the intervening time I do not think that I had set foot in the old Dutch village. I found that Harlem had grown in size with the advent of the horse-cars, and had put on some fresh architectural frills, but the old toll-bridge was there, more rickety than ever, and the old inn by the river-side, more shabby and shambling than in former years. The flounders were there, but the new generation of boatmen charged two shillings an hour for their skiffs, and bait was an extra item. Across the river a scientific descendant of Tubal Cain had purchased a large plot of ground from the Morris heirs and called it after his own name. The old possessors of the soil rebelled at the name, but the new settler, whose foundery had put life into a sleeping locality, set up a painted sign, "Mott Haven," and clinched the business by obtaining from Uncle Sam the appointment of a postmaster.* Like the pioneer patriarchs from Holland, after

* A Westchester correspondent writes that he has heard that when the elder Jordan L. Mott had received from the hands of Gouverneur Morris, "The Patroon," the title-deeds of his purchase on Harlem River, he inquired whether he might be permitted to call his newly acquired territory Mott Haven. "Yes," was the answer, "and for all that I care you may change the name of the Harlem River to the Jordan, and dip into it as often as you want to." Thus contemporaneous history differs, and the reader is left at liberty to make his choice between the new version and the old. The Patroon in question was rough and ready, not unlike old Zachary Taylor, whom he resembled in personal appearance, though he was taller than the general. He

Mr. Mott had fairly got his tent pitched in the plains of Westchester, he looked around for a good place to build a canal, and forthwith dug one in the rear of his foundery, extending north from Harlem River to a distance of about a quarter of a mile. Then he waited for developments, which do not yet seem to have developed themselves, but may do so in the future. Meanwhile the village of Morrisania had sprung up into vigorous life, and following in its wake came other smaller settlements, such as Melrose, Wilton, and North New York, now become part of the old city by annexation, with scarce a trace left of their rural existence. From the bridge out to Fordham, at that time, meandered at uncertain intervals the cars of the famous "huckleberry road," which generously accommodated all except those who were in a hurry, and whose stockholders then walked by faith in the future, and not by sight of the present. There was a foundery at Port Morris, amid the samphire beds that cluster around that magnificent roadstead. At Wilton were the homes of a score of actors whom Eddy, the dramatic successor of Edwin Forrest, had gathered about himself, and whose festival day was Sunday. Old St. Ann's Church still harbored the aristocracy of the peninsula, but streets had been laid out in its vicinity, and there was talk of rearing blocks of brick and mortar thereabouts and introducing new social elements. On Buena Ridge some ambitious villas had already made their appearance, and thriving mechanics had reared some score of comfortable

always led his workmen in the field, scythe or sickle in hand, and few could keep up with him in harvesting. Some of his aristocratic neighbors criticised him, but he cared nothing about it.

houses in Mott Haven. Already the famous old hostlery of Horace Ward, near the railroad bridge, where for a dozen years the belles and beaus of Morrisania and parts adjacent had gathered for the winter dance, was beginning to look shabby, and more ambitious rivals in the hotel line were talked of for the upper settlements.

It was in this transition state soon after the close of the war. I had last looked upon the place in its rustic freshness when I was a boy; I came back to it a bronzed veteran of camp and field, and found it changed, like myself. Yet it had its charm for me still. The name of the old Revolutionary family still lent a distinct historic flavor to the land. Off Port Morris the British frigate *Hussar* had gone down, with great treasures of gold on board, and carrying, it was said, some shackled and helpless American prisoners with her. By day a crew of divers were at work over the place where the treasure was supposed to be entombed in the sands, and at night (so it was stated at quiet firesides and in awe-struck whispers) the ghosts of the hapless followers of the Continental Congress were seen to wander about the shore and clink their chains to warn away the treasure-seekers. Besides, was it not even told that, on the wooded point just above, wicked Captain Kidd had buried a portion of his treasures, and placed a perpetual guard above it by shooting one of his sailors and burying him in the same trench with the chest of gold, silver, precious stones, and the spoils of foreign cathedrals?

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FIRST BRASS BAND — "THE LIGHT GUARD QUICKSTEP" — GENERAL TRAINING-DAY — A FALSTAFFIAN ARMY — MILITIAMEN IN THEIR GLORY — OUR CRACK CORPS

BEFORE me lies a worn and faded piece of music, "The Light Guard Quickstep," composed and dedicated to Captain Vincent by T. J. Dodworth. It was played in front of the Astor House on days of anniversary parade, out of compliment to Mr. Stetson, the proprietor, who was a lieutenant in this crack corps, and who afterwards did good service as a soldier of the Union. To the Light Guards and to the Dodworths belong the credit of organizing our first military bands, and they did it handsomely. When Jullien, the conductor, returned to England from his trip through this country, he told the London musicians that it would not pay them to come here, as there was a musician in New York with a whole houseful of sons who had a band equal to anything the Old World could produce.

The organized bands of music in this city are the growth of the last half century. Before that time the drum and fife did duty for the militia when on parade. I suppose that it would be a slur upon the average intellect of the Legislature to give credence to the story told of an honest member from the lake region, who had fought as a soldier at Chippewa, and

SHAKESPEARE TAVERN

who made his maiden speech upon a bill which proposed to organize the militia of the State. "Mr. Speaker," said ex-Leftenant Hayseed, with the conscious pride of a veteran whose feet are lighted by the lamp of experience, "I am opposed to organs. Our fathers fit with fife and drum at Saratoga, and so did we at Chippewa, and we made the redcoats skip every time. And besides, Mr. Speaker, them organs would be mighty onhandy things to have around in

time of battle." Whether owing to this patriotic and enlightened stand or not, the martial music of Bunker Hill and of White Plains, of Lundy's Lane and Plattsburg, continued to inspire the militia of this city for many a long year after peace had been declared between Great Britain and the United States. Some boys, who are still more venerable than myself, have told me that the first fragmentary attempts at military bands in this city were made by negro musicians; and this is entirely credible, because the African has in his nature the rhythm and soul of melody, and turns to music as a thrush warbles in the hedge. Be that as it may, the original Tom Dodworth (who at this time kept a small music and fruit store on Broadway), was the father of all our great military bands. His own organization, which was first known as the National Brass Band, but afterwards was very naturally popularized into Dodworth's Band, made their first parade in uniform of buff and blue at the head of the regiment known as the Governor's Guard, then commanded by Colonel Pears, a worthy warrior who had a confectionery store on Broadway opposite the park. Soon other competitors came into the field. Wallace, whose orchestra made music at Peale's Museum, on Broadway, between Murray and Warren streets, and who had almost as many sons as Dodworth, organized the New York Brass Band, and he was followed by Lothian and others. The war with Mexico lent a fresh impetus to martial music. Then came the war for the Union, with its demand for military bands that should keep the pulse of soldier and people at battle heat, and out of this has been finally evolved the magnificent martial music

that now puts the soul of the soldier into the militia that march through our streets.

I have spoken of the Light Guard as a crack corps. Its rival was the City Guard, under command of Captain McArdle. The drill of these two companies was superb; their social composition was most exclusive. In the little city of their day not only were the officers men of mark, but every private in the rear ranks was necessarily somebody. The militia idea ran to what might be called small cliques. In point of fact, they were the clubs of the period. The regimental bond, in all cases loose, was for the most part nominal. The Cadets and the Hussars, the Light Guard and the City Guard, the Kosciuskos and the Lafayettes, the Tompkins Blues and the Washington Greys, were the distinguishing social as well as military marks of the men about town. Money was profusely expended on equipments and entertainments, and uniforms were selected without the slightest reference to their compatibility with republican institutions. The City Guard adopted the magnificent dress of the Coldstream Guards, and the Light Guard donned the showy Austrian uniform; and so it happened that when Louis Kossuth landed in our city he started back with an involuntary shudder at finding himself surrounded by the hated uniform of the House of Hapsburg, the Light Guard having been appointed a guard of honor as escort of the Hungarian patriot.

The present generation has much to boast of in its advance upon the traditions and inventions of the fathers, but it has forever missed some delights whose memories are still redolent of pleasure to us who are

tottering down the western slope of the hill. To the boy of to-day the once magic words "general training-day" have no meaning. To the Oldboys they still convey through memory's kaleidoscope rare pictures of the past. The "June training" was a holiday whether the school-house kept its doors open or not. At one time it covered the space of three days; later on a single day was devoted to the public instruction in the manual of arms. And a blithesome day it was. It never rained during those twenty-four hours. Very early in the sweet summer morning the victims and votaries of Mars used to assemble on the gravelled sidewalk of St. John's Park and in other convenient places, and go through the manual in awkward array. Short and tall, old and young, shabby and well dressed, the motley crew were ranged in line, while the instructor in tactics, sword at side and with rattan in hand, endeavored to switch them into order and swear into their dull heads some idea of military discipline. It was a spectacle for which all New York prepared itself for weeks in advance with a broad grin. A virtual holiday, it always culminated in a carnival. When the hour arrived for the display of this motley crew in parade, all New York poured forth into the streets through which its awkward army marched, and laughed until its sides ached.

In later days our local militia were attired in a magnificence of style unequalled by Solomon in all his glory. But in this somewhat primitive era, when, in view of the late war with Great Britain, every citizen was to be deemed a possible soldier, uniforms were a rarity. Each future hero of the battle-field attired and armed himself as seemed good in his own

eyes, and could Falstaff have reviewed one of those June trainings, he would have evolved new turnings to his description of his own scarecrow regiment. None of the militia of the general training-day epoch were uniformed except the Light Guard, the City Guard, and the Washington Greys, of the infantry line, a battery of flying artillery, and the Washington Horse Troop. These uniformed corps constituted the flank companies of the main body of military in citizens' clothes. Description is beggared as the mind tries to recall them. Some wore the old-time furred high hats, many wore caps, occasionally one was bareheaded, and at intervals the "beaver" of an enthusiastic trainer was decorated at the side with a large black feather and cockade. The taste in dress was equally bizarre. The swallow-tail coat of the period was the rule, but it was found in company with the frock-coat, roundabout, pea-jacket, blouse of every color, and the red shirt from the Bowery precincts. The exhibit of trousers was as miscellaneous in shape and color. Some of the gallant crew had the lower garment tucked in the boot-leg, and occasionally one wore knee-breeches, then not wholly discarded, and a few were arrayed as Indians, or in the costume of Christmas fantasticals. At rare intervals a company appeared in regulation broadcloth crossed with white belts, high hats, and cockades, and, being armed uniformly, presented for the moment quite a martial appearance, which, however, served only to bring the rest of the Falstaffian army into ridicule. The armament of the gallant militia was so varied as to be sublime, and could not have failed to strike terror into the soul of any foreign spectator. Some of

the heroes of the parade carried an old "King's arm" that had done service in 1812, or in the Revolutionary and French wars, in the hands of their fathers and grandfathers; others had a more modern flintlock or a fowling-piece. A few had bayonets, and a few more possessed belts and cartridge-boxes. Those who had no other weapon of offence armed themselves with cord-wood saplings, canes, umbrellas, and broomsticks, carried proudly at shoulder arms. Viewed as an army, this host of patriots was fearfully and wonderfully made; viewed as a pageant it was sublime. "Sare," said a polite French visitor, who had been under fire at Marengo and at Waterloo, and had been invited to assist in reviewing our gallant militia, "I have seen ze troops of ze grand Napoleon, and ze soldiers of ze terrible Russe, and ze John Bull zat you make run, sare, but I nevare see such troops as zese, sare—nevare!"

The fun of training-day was phenomenal, but it had to be paid for. After the glory of the review came the terrors of the court-martial. In a few weeks those who had failed to turn out for inspection, as by law directed, and those who had not equipped themselves in such martial array as the statute required, found themselves standing in the impressive presence of a circle of epauletted officers, whose sternness was equalled only by the amount of gold-lace that bedizened them. Then woe befell the unlucky wight who had hoped to escape detection as an artful dodger of his duty, or the careless trainer, whose bayonet, cartridge-box, or musket had not materialized itself to the inspector's eye. All delinquents were incontinently fined in sums varying from 25 cents to $5, and those

who had not the money to pay were promptly filed off under guard and consigned to the iron grasp of Marshal Davids. The unhappy defender of his country's honor had no alternative but to furnish the hard cash, or to rest his martial bones in Eldridge Street Jail until such time as his fine had been liquidated, at the rate of one dollar for each day of imprisonment. 'Twas ever thus, that those who would dance must pay the piper.

The military system of the city and State was a far-reaching one in the days when I first took delight in stealing out to follow a parade through the streets. It will surprise the miltiaman of to-day to learn that Colonel Tappan commanded the Two Hundred and Thirty-sixth Regiment of Infantry, and that the late Colonel Devoe was commandant of the Two Hundred and Sixty-ninth Regiment. One reads the history of general training-day in the record of Maj.-gen. James I. Jones, who commanded the Thirteenth Division of the State militia, composed of the Fifty-ninth and Sixty-third Brigades of Infantry. In the latter command were the Seventy-fifth Regiment, under command of Col. Frederick S. Boyd; Two Hundred and Forty-ninth Regiment, Col. George Dixey; Two Hundred and Fifty-eighth Regiment, Col. John P. Wake; and Two Hundred and Sixty-ninth, Colonel Devoe. Brigadier-general Hunt was in command of the New York State artillery, and the First Brigade, located here, was composed of the Second Regiment, Governor's Guards, Colonel Pears; Ninth Regiment, National Cadets, Colonel Slipper; Twenty-seventh Regiment, National Guard (present Seventh Regiment), Colonel Jones. This formidable list of our local defenders

VIEW OF NEW YORK BAY FROM THE BATTERY, 1822

gives one the idea of an army as great as that which the war for the Union called into existence. But it was a host on paper, for the most part, and experience demonstrated the advisability of adopting a policy of enlistment in later years.

When Major-general Macomb rode at the head of New York's martial array, the brigadiers were Lloyd, Kiersted, Sandford, and Morris. But my eyes did not take in the personality of the warriors until such time as Brigadier-general Sandford had been promoted to the dignity of a major-general, and the brigadiers whom I can personally recall are Generals Storms, Hall, and Morris—the saddle-maker, the music-dealer, and the poet. This quartet of soldiers were men whom I envied in my youth. Their cocked hats and glittering epaulets, their prancing steeds and clanking sabres, filled my soul with yearnings after the battle-field. As for the major-general, he was the god Mars incarnate. How eagerly I always waited for his wild dash down the street at the head of a blazing constellation of gold-laced aides and outriders. When, towards mid-day, the command to march was given, it was a great day in New York. No such martial sight is vouchsafed in these degenerate days. In the ranks of the soldiers of that period marched the warriors of every nation under the sun. Throughout many regiments the uniforms of no two companies were the same, and the effect was dazzling. Looking from an upper balcony, one caught a bird's-eye view of the crimson coats of England, the green of Italy, the plaids of Scotland, the buff and blue of the old Continentals, the blue and red of France, the white coats of Austria, the bizarre uniforms of Poland and Hun-

gary, and martial costumes of all colors, that seemed to be composed for the occasion. Verily, and in unexaggerated fact, the magnificent monarch who dazzled the eyes of the maiden Queen of Sheba was not arrayed like one of these!

As I write of these glories of the militiamen of other days, I am reminded of the day when my own regiment marched down Broadway en route to the front, amid the clapping of hands, and waving of handkerchiefs, and cheers of assembled multitudes, and under escort of one of the commands of which mention has been made—the old Second Regiment. The three months' term for which we had enlisted was prolonged to two years, and to many of my comrades this meant death on the field of battle, to others wounds and imprisonment, and to all long months in camp and field that aged us as years age men elsewhere. We marched away to the burst of martial music, and with our full military band. When we came back it was with tattered remnants of flags, and with not more than 100 of the 800 who had marched away. To the sound of fife and drum the bronzed and bearded men who had gone out as rosy-cheeked youth marched up Broadway, dusty, weary, but crowned with the unseen laurels of patriotism. So had my fathers marched back from Lundy's Lane and Niagara, from Monmouth and Stillwater. I thought of it then with pride. I write it now with glad and thankful pen.

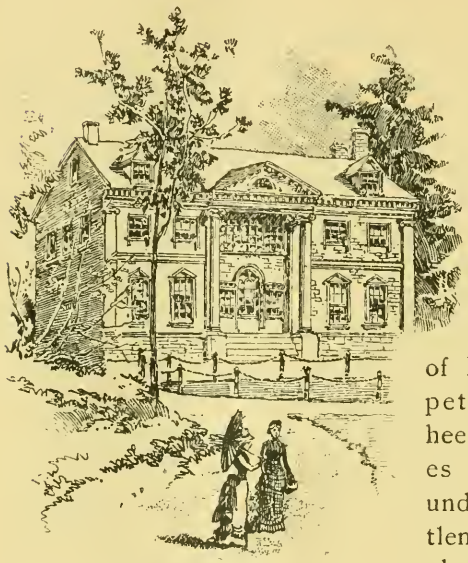
CHAPTER XIX

COLONIAL FOOTPRINTS—HAUNTS OF WASHINGTON AND HOWE—COUNTRY-SEAT OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON—EAST SIDE JOURNEYINGS—OLD DAYS IN YORKVILLE AND HARLEM—THE BEEKMAN MANSION

GOING! Going! Gone!

This has been the croak of the raven of speculation over many an old colonial mansion that was stately even in its decay, but lives now only in memory. The homes of a former century that bore the names of Lispenard, Warren, Kip, De Lancey, Beekman, Murray, and many another citizen of high repute in ancient annals can be found now only on maps that are yellow with age. The prim hedges of box, the groves of locust-trees that were so fragrant in the spring-time, the gardens filled with hollyhocks and poppies and white roses, with feverfew and sage and all warrantable herbs, the summer beauty of beech and elm and tulip tree, have vanished with the people who moved amid them and loved them. Into the velvet of the lawn the iron tire of the contractor's chariot, synonyme of the material progress of the age, has carved its cruel way, and a row of tenement-houses follows the line of broad piazzas. It seems a pity that the quaint old mantel-piece, whose tiles told to the young aristocrats of a hundred years ago the story of Elijah, the Prodigal Son, or Jonah, with such serene violation of the laws of perspective; the shab-

by old mirrors that reached from ceiling to floor, and that still told the glory of the brave men and fair women whose forms once flashed before them; the broad staircases guarded by tall mahogany balustrades, all black with age, up which swept the belles of colonial New York, passing fair, in gowns of India-silk, satin petticoats, high-heeled shoes, patches and powder, under escort of gentlemen who were elegant in velvet of all colors, brocaded waistcoats, lace neck-cloths, silken stockings, and diamond buckles, but who were ever ready to draw the rapier in defence of honor—it seems a pity, I say, that these should vanish under the touch of the auctioneer's hammer. Yet, perhaps, it is better so; better that the old homestead should be torn down by an unknown vandal than it should linger to its decay in stage after stage of helpless, hopeless ruin. Certainly if the old mansion on the Battery that was consecrated in history



APTHORPE MANSION, BLOOMINGDALE

by Washington's presence is razed by the same hand that rears a monument to the most despicable of English spies, it might be well to prevent a repetition of the sacrilege by levelling all our existing colonial monuments to the ground. Welcome the hammer of the auctioneer sooner than the touch of the speculator in patriotism, or the slow lapse into architectural senility which would turn the banqueting-hall of Earl Cornwallis into a hen-roost.

One Sunday afternoon I visited the old Apthorpe Mansion that used to face the Hudson River and the Bloomingdale Road, but now is hemmed in by Ninth and Tenth avenues at Ninety-first Street, and is threatened on all sides by the bewildering touch of improvement. The full glory of the warm April sun lay upon the old place. Yet, though it was a centre of desolation, there was a remnant of individual majesty in the dwelling and its surroundings. No one could mistake its birth for other than colonial. The great pillars from roof to porch, the stately gables over door and window, the broad reception-hall extending from front to rear, the height of ceilings above and below, were all proof of antiquity clear as print to the eye. If more evidence was needed, inside were the antique dining-room, with walls and mantel-piece and ceiling of oak, now blackened by age, whose great panels and joists were imported from England in the days of colonial splendor that preceded the Revolution. Outside was the ample lawn stretching down towards the river, dotted with groves of elms, locusts, button-wood, and ancient cherry—great trees that required more than one man to span their girth, beneath whose shade half a dozen

generations of youth and beauty had disported themselves.

As I stood alone upon the porch in the afternoon sun, and looked up the river towards the Palisades and down towards Castle Point, the air was thick with the shadows that trooped up from the past. There had been nothing romantic in the ride on the elevated train; there was no sentiment in the dilapidated surroundings; and the sunshine was the deadly foe of anything like an apparition. Yet it seemed to me as I stood there as if I had lived another life, in which the old mansion, not then weather-beaten as now, but stately and untarnished, and set in a brilliant garland of shrubs and flowers, had played a prominent part. I could hear close at hand the rustle of silken dresses and the clank of swords — the merry peal of laughter and the jingle of the wine-glass—and not far distant I could hear the note of hurried preparation and the tramp of departing columns. Some one in buff and blue — a stalwart young officer in whose soul I lived—bade silent and sad adieu to a fair young girl whose sun-brown curls rippled down her neck and coquetted with her dimpled shoulders; and I could swear that I had looked into her eyes in some state of my existence and madly loved her. Yet I—no, he—rode away with the rear-guard, catching sight, last of all, of a fluttering handkerchief between the locust branches, and of a little, little hand.

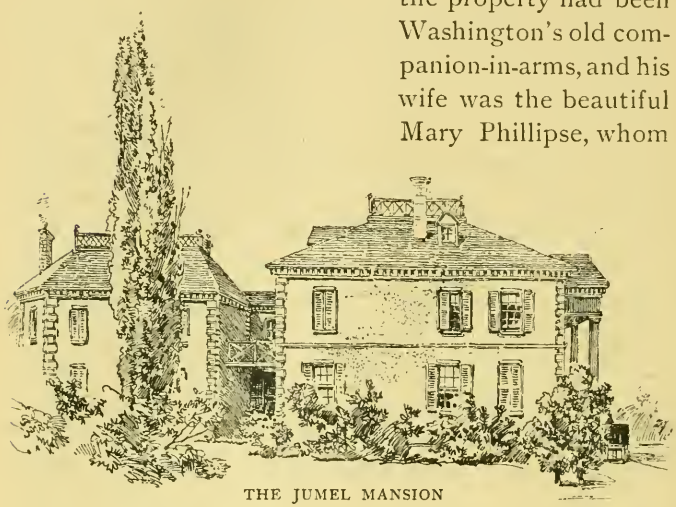
It was an eerie experience, and yet perfectly real throughout. I do not know but that it may have been I who really carried on that desperate flirtation. Perhaps I was married afterwards without my own knowledge. It may be that I was my own great-grandfa-

ther, who rode away among the Continental soldiers on that day. But I fear that I may be getting out of my own depth in thus attempting to philosophize —and my grandmother would have told me that it served me right for travelling into the country on Sunday. One thing I do know — that I shall not cavil again at the theory of a state of pre-existence, for I solemnly aver that it seemed perfectly natural to see a line of scarlet soldiery stretching across the Bloomingdale road, and to prepare to hold them in check. For it was at this old mansion that Lord Howe had his headquarters when the Connecticut Rangers and the Virginia Riflemen, under Leitch and Knowlton (both of whom were slain), sent the British column, headed by the indomitable Highlanders, flying across Harlem Plain down towards this point and through McGowan's Pass. Here Lord Howe remained for some days and nursed his wounded honor, and Clinton and Carleton and André also led the minuet in these rooms and gave royalist belles a taste of the court splendors of King George. Whether this historic house is to be destroyed or to linger yet a little longer will be determined by the market value of the lots on which it stands.*

The mansion which Washington occupied as his headquarters on the day of the victory at Harlem Plains — the Roger Morris house — stands on the heights that overlook Harlem River, a little below

* The Apthorpe mansion, long degraded to a beer-garden, has disappeared (1892). Its site will soon be covered by "flats." The fine cluster of buildings for the new St. Agnes' Chapel of Trinity Parish—church, clergy-house, choir and schoolrooms, etc.—stands upon a portion of the old Apthorpe ground.

the High Bridge. It always seemed to me a strange chance that led the American general to this roof. The loyalist owner of the property had been Washington's old companion-in-arms, and his wife was the beautiful Mary Phillipse, whom



THE JUMEL MANSION

the provincial Colonel Washington, visiting New York after the defeat of Braddock and his own brilliant achievements on the unfortunate field of Fort Du Quesne, had wooed in vain. It will be a pity if no one comes forward to purchase and preserve the house for its historical association, for as from no point on the Island of Manhattan can so commanding a view be obtained, so none of the old colonial homesteads has so many and varied historical associations. Built of bricks brought from Holland, the house has been a landmark from the day of its completion. General Washington planned his battles in its library, and here also he held consultations with the chiefs of the Indian

tribes, and gave his secret instructions to the "spy of the neutral ground." The estate was confiscated after the Revolution, and then it was purchased by John Jacob Astor, who made half a million dollars by his speculation. He sold the house to Stephen Jumel, who filled the rooms with costly furniture that was part of the spoils of French palaces, and embellished the grounds with rare trees and shrubs. Madame Jumel in her widowhood married Aaron Burr, but this alliance with the rude, unlettered woman was of short duration, and he left her in disgust and sought seclusion on Staten Island. Then for years the old woman lived alone, a terror to her servants and shunned by her neighbors, and left the legacy of a long lawsuit to her relatives. The estate has been shorn of its original dimensions and much of its old beauty, but the old house remains, as solid and substantial as when first built, and, standing on its piazza, one sees not only the lower city and Brooklyn Bridge, but seven counties in two different States, three rivers, Long Island Sound, the bay, and, in a clear atmosphere, a glimpse of the distant ocean.* It was while Washington made this brief sojourn at the Morris mansion that he had his attention called to Alexander Hamilton. During his inspection of the works thrown up at Harlem for the protection of his army,

* The Jumel mansion is in sympathetic ownership and occupancy (1892), and there is design of purchasing it for perpetual preservation by an association. The ground-plan of this stately old house (which bears the date 1758 upon the keystone of an arch in the main hall) is a square, connected by a narrower parallelogram with an octagon containing the room of state. The owners say that from its roof thirteen counties are to be seen.—L.

the American commander was struck by the skill displayed in the arrangement and disposition of a certain fort which was in charge of a young captain of artillery. On making inquiry it turned out that the name of the officer in question was Alexander Hamilton (then a youth of twenty), of whom General Greene had previously spoken to his superior in terms of high praise. Washington at once sought the acquaintance of the youth, and there and then the friendship began which linked their lives and their fame together.

Within sight of the fort he had built, and the field upon which he had fought, and within a little more than a mile from the Morris mansion, General Hamilton afterwards selected the site for his suburban home —the Grange. This beautiful structure, one of the finest remaining specimens of the classic style of architecture that our fathers fancied, is situated north of One Hundred and Fortieth Street and east of Tenth Avenue. Its site, selected by Hamilton, cannot be excelled for picturesqueness. Magnificent forest trees shade the ample grounds, and near the house is a cluster of thirteen trees that Hamilton planted with his own hand to symbolize the original thirteen States of the Union. They were in serious danger of being uprooted by the new aqueduct, which passes through the grounds, but have happily escaped. How long they will continue to stand is problematical. Even now it is feared that the house is doomed to destruction. The land is in the market, and unless a special effort is made to secure its preservation, it will probably be taken down and an ambitious modern villa will occupy its site. Perhaps Hamilton Terrace, with its

proposed beautiful park, its lawns and tasteful dwellings, will be an improvement upon the dignified old homestead, the natural glory of the old forest landscape, and the grove of thirteen trees which emblazon history in their tints; but we who are conservatives from a former generation will hardly think so.*

Speaking of old buildings reminds me that I have received a friendly criticism, by post, for not giving more details of the Third Avenue, through which I passed on my stolen fishing excursion of forty years ago. At that time, after leaving Astor Place, there was nothing compact in the way of buildings until we reached Bull's Head Village, which extended from Second to Fourth avenues and from Twenty-third to

THE HAMILTON HOUSE

Twenty-seventh streets. Here was the great cattle mart of the city, and here it had been for twenty years. But soon after it was removed to Forty-second

* See note in Chapter xxvi., p. 330.—L.

Street, and thence to Ninety-fourth Street, from which point it was transferred to the Jersey shore a few years since. The people of old Bull's Head Village worshipped in the Presbyterian Church, now standing in Twenty-second Street west of Third Avenue; at the Twenty-seventh Street Methodist Church, and at the little Episcopal Chapel of St. John the Baptist, on the east side of Fourth Avenue, near Twenty-third Street, which was demolished thirty years ago on the completion of the fine church of the same name at Lexington Avenue and Thirty-fifth Street.

After leaving Twenty-seventh Street and Third Avenue the traveller was in the country. There was no other settlement until Yorkville was reached, nearly two miles beyond. Scattered farm-houses, distant villas, green fields, and bits of woodland made up the landscape. The commodious country-seat of Anson G. Phelps on the East River was reached from Twenty-seventh Street. In the vicinity of Thirty-second Street the inhabitants imported from the river the name of Kip's Bay, and lent it to the Thompson and Henderson homesteads thereabout, and to the grocery store that was for many years owned and conducted by a brother of Peter Cooper, a very worthy gentleman, who died not long ago, having passed his ninetieth birthday. Sunfish Pond, famous for its eels, as well as sunfish and flounders, occupied the site of the Fourth Avenue stables at Thirty-second Street, and extended westward to Madison Avenue. From this pond a brook ran to the East River, following very nearly the line of Thirty-second Street. The brook was almost dry in summer, but, in times of freshets, it overflowed its banks and spread from the foot of

THE GATES WEEPING WILLOW, 22D STREET AND 3D AVENUE

Rose Hill at the South to Murray Hill on the north. When it was in a desperately angry mood, the residents of houses that are still standing could reach the avenue only in boats.

The residence of Peter Cooper—of rare and blessed memory always in this city of ours—stood then and still stands at the south-west corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty-eighth Street. It was a plain and unpretending structure, and yet substantial withal, as

befitted its builder. In front of his residence the Eastern Post Road passed to nearly the present line of Lexington Avenue, which it continued to follow until near Forty-second Street, when it joined Third Avenue. On its western side stood several large and fine residences owned by opulent Knickerbockers, embowered in gardens, half hidden by trees, and buried in deep lawns—the realization to weary travellers of an earthly paradise. On Third Avenue there were no dwellings until we reached the point at which the old "Cato" Road stretched out towards Second Avenue from Forty-third Street to Fifty-first, and thence circled around to the "Turtle Bay" region and the famous hostlery kept by Cato. Tradition does not tell whether he had any other name besides Cato. A great cloud of witnesses, principally gray-haired, still survive to testify that his dinners and suppers were simply incomparable. Everybody who owned or could hire a "rig" drove out there at least once a week and feasted himself. Burnham, on the Bloomingdale Road at Seventy-fourth Street, was Cato's only rival, but a formidable one.

At Forty-ninth Street and Third Avenue was a tiny hamlet known as Odellville, which owed its patronymic to Mr. Odell, who kept a country tavern at the corner first named, and with whom life agreed so well that he nearly lived out a century. Just across Third Avenue and above Fiftieth Street was the old potter's field, which next followed those of Washington and Madison squares; and, strange to say, not far from its northern borders was a spring of soft, pure water which was extensively carried away in carts to supply the distant city. This water readily commanded two

cents a pail, and its sale was not discontinued until some time after the introduction of Croton water—many old people having a preference for it as well as a decided distaste for new-fangled aqueducts and water brought in pipes. Between Odellville and the Five-mile public-house at Seventy-second Street there were a few scattered country-houses, many fields, some considerable forest tracts, and then came the village of Yorkville. Half a century ago this was quite an extensive settlement, reaching from Eighty-third to Eighty-eighth streets, compactly built on both sides of Third Avenue and to Second and Fourth avenues on the intersecting streets. The village must

VAN DEN HEUVEL (AFTERWARDS "BURNHAM'S") HOUSE.

have numbered more than a hundred houses, with three or four churches and a dozen stores. It never was a pretty place, but down towards the East River, and facing that picturesque stream, were some superb country residences in those days—such as the Schermerhorn mansion at the foot of Seventy-third Street, and the Riker homestead at the foot of Seventy-fifth Street. Elegant lawns stretched down to the river-front, and from the ample piazzas the scene was a panorama of beauty.

The Six-mile Tavern awaited the thirsty pilgrim at the corner of Ninety-seventh Street and Third Avenue. Our excellent forefathers always placed a mile-stone and a tavern together, by a gracious instinct which held that the dust of which our mortality is composed needed moistening at the end of a mile's march. It was a good doctrine to stick to. The newest imported idea allows three saloons upon a single block on our busiest avenues. But our progenitors were behind the times—good men, but they did not understand human nature. They believed in a man owning as much land as he could manage comfortably, and only taking as much drink as was good for him. The new doctrinaires deny man's right to own any land, and insist that he shall impose no restriction on his own or his neighbor's right to drink all that he wishes. Thus we live and learn. But this is a digression. From the Six-mile Tavern we begin to descend the valley towards Harlem. It is a rough road. To the left is an abrupt stone ledge that runs up into McGowan's Pass; to the right are the marshes of Harlem Commons, through which the East River extends up to the avenue for the distance of a mile. There was

FORT CLINTON, AT M'GOWAN'S PASS

not a house to be seen until One Hundred and Second Street was reached, at which point a lane turned down to the celebrated Red House at First Avenue and One Hundred and Sixth Street, where a trotting course called together the owners of fast horses, especially on Sunday afternoons.

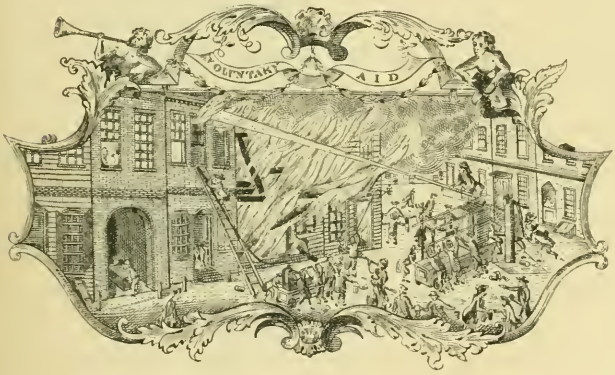
At One Hundred and Sixth Street the canal crossed the road, and beyond this point and up to One Hundred and Twentieth Street there were a few scattered houses, mostly detached, but here was again quite a settlement. Many of the houses still stand, transformed into places of business. At One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street was a tavern which now figures as a drug-store, and from this point the village of Harlem began. Up to the time of the advent of the horse-cars, Harlem contained some two hundred houses, scattered over nearly a mile square, from Fifth

Avenue to the East River. Among the more notable residences were those of Dr. Quackenbush, Judge Ingraham, Isaac Adriance, Charles Henry Hall, Andrew McGowan, and John Van Voorhis. At this time One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Street was the only paved thoroughfare north of Astor Place. Mr. Hall was a city Alderman in 1832, and was one of a committee appointed during the prevalence of the cholera to visit Quarantine and report. Within a fortnight all of his colleagues had died, and Alderman Hall attributed his escape to the salubrity of his country residence at Harlem. His house still stands on a knoll just west of Fifth Avenue, a spacious edifice, but much dilapidated.

That is the minor key running through most of the descriptions of old haunts of history in our city—stately, spacious, but dilapidated! I used to think of this years ago when I looked at the shabby ruin of the superb old Beekman mansion which used to stand just west of First Avenue, between Fifty-first and Fifty-second streets. Its windows looked out on Turtle Bay; its garden, greenhouse, and lawns were models of perfection in their prime; its interior was elegant and left nothing to be desired. Here Baroness Riedesel had her home after her husband was captured at Saratoga. In one of its rooms André, the spy, spent his

THE BEEKMAN HOUSE

last night in New York before going out to meet dishonor. Here Lord Howe passed sentence of death on Nathan Hale, the martyr spy of the Revolution, in whose honor New York has not erected the monument he deserves. Yet with all these associations I was not sorry to find the Beekman house torn down, for I had felt that the ghosts of its former occupants, if they were permitted to return to earth, would annihilate themselves with grief over its decay.



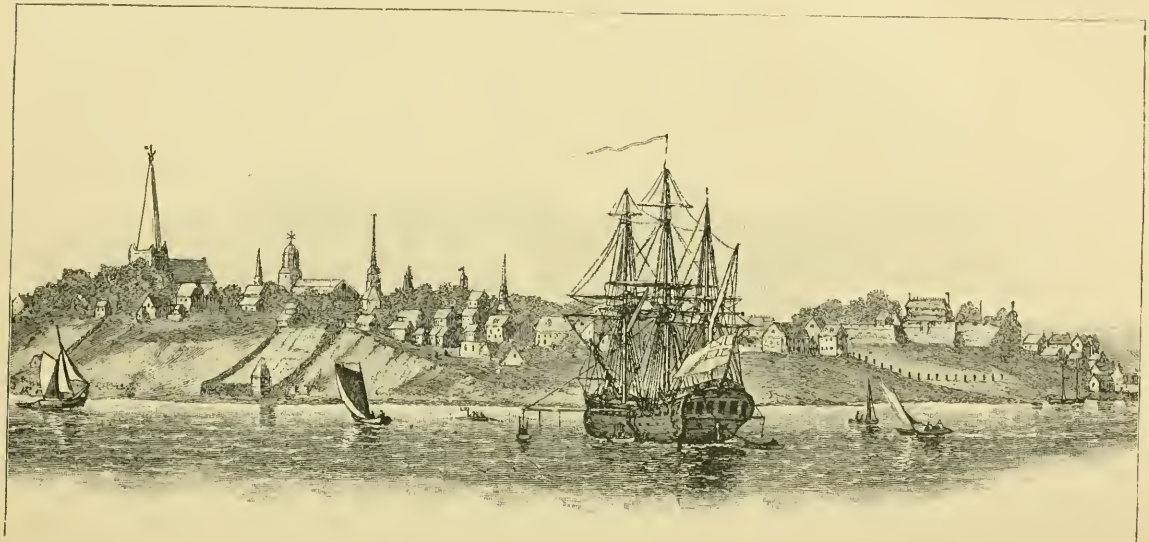
FIRE IN OLDEN TIMES

CHAPTER XX

A CIVIC PANTHEON—FIRST BLOOD OF THE REVOLUTION—MERCHANTS WHO WERE STATESMEN—THE DISINHERITED DAUGHTER—IN AN OLD TAVERN

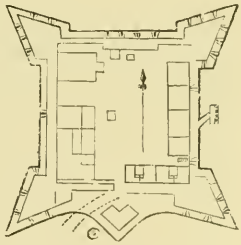
IT has always appeared strange to me that New York merchants seem to know or care so little about the great names that have adorned the commerce of this city. There is no harm in erecting statues to Lafayette, Seward, and Franklin, or in placing Washington on his feet in Wall Street, and on horseback in Union Square; but it would look better for the local pride of the great metropolis if her citizens reared on the old historic Commons on which the Declaration of Independence was read to the troops in the presence of Washington—the present City Hall Park—heroic statues to the two great merchants of this city, Francis Lewis and Philip Livingston, who signed the Declaration. It would tell the story of the time when there was a political genius as well as a commercial power among the merchants of our city, and the aristocracy of business was as much recognized as that of birth, and far more highly honored. If the Chamber of Commerce magnified its office as the old-time merchants magnified their position, the monuments to the commercial giants of the past would almost rear themselves.

As I look back to the days of Lewis and Livingston and their compeers, I am surprised at the part



FORT GEORGE, FROM THE WATER FRONT OF THE PRESENT BATTERY

they played in public. New York was a little city, but it felt its importance and exacted its full meed of respect. A century and a half ago it struck its first decisive blow for the liberty of the Press. It sent a committee on board the ship *London*, and they threw the cargo of tea overboard in the bay, on April 22, 1774, in broad daylight and without any attempt at disguise. Before this it had organized the Sons of Liberty, "to transmit to our posterity the blessings of freedom which our ancestors have handed down to us," and they met the British soldiery in open battle on Golden Hill two months before the Boston massacre and five years before the fight at Lexington. Indeed, New York has every right to claim that the blood of her citizens was the first that was shed in the cause for freedom. It was her merchants that seized the battery and the fort, and turned the guns on his Majesty's frigate *Asia;* that captured the wagons loaded with arms under escort of the Royal Irish Regiment; that carried off all the type from the office of the *Royal Gazetteer* and melted it into bullets; that pulled down the equestrian statue of King George on the Bowling Green, and had it speedily transmuted into cartridges, fulfilling the threat of one of their number that the British troops should have "melted majesty fired at them." That was a magnificent roster of patriotism which included the names of Peter and Philip Livingston, John Alsop, Isaac Low, John Wiley, Isaac Sears, Marinus Willett, Alexander Mc-



PLAN OF FORT GEORGE, BATTERY

Dougall, John Broome, Leonard Lispenard, Henry Rutgers, Isaac Roosevelt, Duane, Jay, Cruger, Bayard, Clinton, etc. The list is too long to print even as a roll of honor, and the grand little city was as proud of her sons as they were jealous of her honor.

But I must try to come to the present century, even if I have to run back and make a fresh start. When Francis Lewis, son of the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, a sturdy, brainy young Welshman, landed in this city, with a cargo of which he was part owner, in 1735, he found it alive with excitement. Peter Zenger, publisher of the New York *Gazette*, was on trial for seditious libel. It had been ordered that his paper should be burned on the Commons "by the pillory," at the hands of the common hangman, in the presence of the Mayor and Recorder, and he had been cast into prison and denied pen, ink, and paper. The liberty of the Press was endangered, and New York burned to vindicate the majesty of the fourth estate. The services of Andrew Hamilton, the silver-tongued leader of the bar in Philadelphia, then the largest city in the colonies, were secretly engaged in behalf of Zenger. It was a trial that shook the New World. Hamilton's eloquence swept everything before it, and the jury promptly returned a verdict of not guilty. A public dinner was tendered the great barrister by the corporation, and on this occasion the Mayor presented him with the freedom of the city in a magnificent gold snuffbox purchased by private subscription. The whole city escorted him to the barge that was to convey him to Philadelphia, amid the booming of cannon and the waving of banners.

Into this seething little volcano of popular struggles

after the rights of citizenship young Lewis was precipitated. It was the moulding of his manhood. Never hesitating for an instant, he ranged himself on the side of the people as against the Crown, and when the time came for this grand old merchant of New York to prove his sincerity by sacrifice, he laid all that he had upon the altar of his country. It was but the embryo of a city to which the youth of twenty-one came in 1735. Its population was then less than nine thousand, and it lay entirely below the Commons. Young Lewis went at once into partnership with Mr. Edward Annesley in the foreign trade; their store was in Dock Street, near the Merchants' Exchange, that then stood in Broad Street, between what are now Pearl and Water streets. And here comes in a sweet touch of romance, in the story of how the young stranger wooed and won for his wife fair Mary Annesley, sister of his partner, and the acknowledged belle

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, BROAD STREET

A Plan of the City of New York from an actual Survey
Made by James Lyne
1728
North River
Harbour
COMMON
WEST WARD
NORTH WARD
EAST WARD
SOUTH WARD
MONTGOMERIE'S WARD
Broad Way
Parade
Dock Street
Williams Street
Beekmans Swamp
Hunter's Key
Key
Mecadam
Port of Eight Water
Col. Rob. Lurting
MAYOR

of the city. A man of wonderful enterprise, Mr. Lewis visited Russia to make business connections, was shipwrecked off the coast of Ireland, traversed the West Indies, and was the sole survivor of the massacre of Oswego when Montcalm and his Indian allies captured that city. The red men spared his life because of their superstition. Owing to the resemblance between the Welsh language and the Indian dialects, Mr. Lewis was able to converse with them and make himself understood, and their traditions of the Messiah from beyond the great seas led them to look upon the speaker of this strange tongue—the ghost of the tongue they spoke among themselves—with an awe that stayed their hands from slaughter.

So the years went by, filled with commercial triumphs, and when the battle of Lexington was fought the news that upheaved the continent found Francis Lewis retired from business and enjoying the vacation of life in his pleasant country-seat at Whitestone. Then his country called him, and he obeyed. As early as 1765 he had been a member of the Provisional Congress that opposed the Stamp Act, and in 1775 he was elected to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, where he achieved immortality as quietly as he had won the business triumphs of his life by affixing his signature to the Declaration of Independence. Later in the same year his Long Island dwelling was plundered by British soldiers, his valuable library was destroyed, and his wife made prisoner and retained for several months in confinement, under such circumstances of cruelty as broke down her health and brought her quickly to the grave. Yet the old merchant kept right onward. One of the wealthiest men

of the city and the time, he perilled everything for the good cause, and he lost everything. It was enough for him that the cause of justice and a people's liberties won. Yet it came to pass that the sunset of his life was peace and pleasantness. In his home on Cortlandt Street he saw the century close. At seventy he was chosen vestryman of Trinity Church. Twenty years later, on December 30, 1803, he died, when his years had reached fourscore and ten, and was reverently interred in Trinity church-yard.

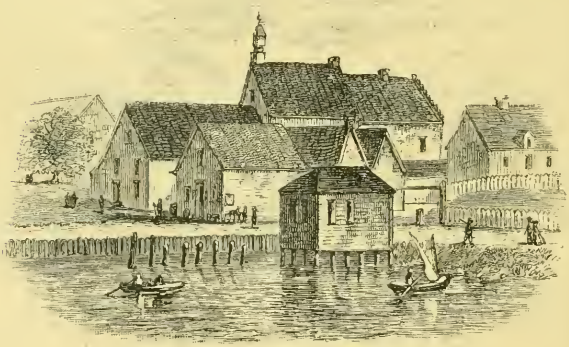
Francis Lewis, eldest son of the old signer, was a man of influence in his day, marrying Elizabeth, daughter of Daniel Ludlow, an eminent merchant, and leaving many descendants. One of his daughters married Samuel G. Ogden, who was a distinguished merchant of New York at the opening of the present century. The second son, Morgan Lewis, was a much more famous man. Taking up arms at the beginning of the Revolutionary struggle, he distinguished himself at Stillwater, where he was the officer who received the surrender of Burgoyne's troops, and rose to the command of a regiment. In the war of 1812 he was a major-general, did good service at the Niagara frontier, and had charge of the defences of New York. In looking up his military record I was surprised to find that in November, 1775, Morgan Lewis was appointed first major of the Second Regiment, of which John Jay was colonel. I had never heard of the distinguished jurist as a soldier, and I find that other important duties intervened, and that he did not accept the command. Equally competent in the forum and the field, Morgan Lewis served as Attorney-general and Chief-justice of the Supreme Court of this State, and was

elected Governor and afterwards United States Senator. In 1779 he married Gertrude, daughter of Chancellor Livingston. Their only child, a daughter, became the wife of Maturin Livingston. For forty years or more the Governor occupied a spacious double mansion at the corner of Church and Leonard streets, where he dispensed a patriarchal hospitality. From this house he was buried on April 11, 1844. I recall the occasion. As Governor Lewis was President-general of the Society of the Cincinnati and Grand Master of Masons, there was to be a great display, and every school-boy in town—of whom I was one—was anxious to see it, and I think we were all there. The military, the veterans of the Cincinnati, the martial music, and the paraphernalia of the Freemasons made an imposing and stately procession. The streets were thronged with people on the whole line of march, from the house on Leonard Street to St. Paul's Church, where the funeral services were held—Trinity Church being then in process of rebuilding. I remember that I had eyes only for one man, the venerable Major Popham, last survivor of the original members of the Cincinnati, whom George Washington had commissioned, who was hale and hearty at ninety-two, and looked as if he might round the century. There had been talk of this veteran at my home, and with the old Revolutionary colonel lying in his coffin, the major who survived him became to my eyes almost coeval with the Pharaohs, and I watched him and wondered what thoughts were throbbing under his white hairs, and what memories of other days were tugging at his heart.

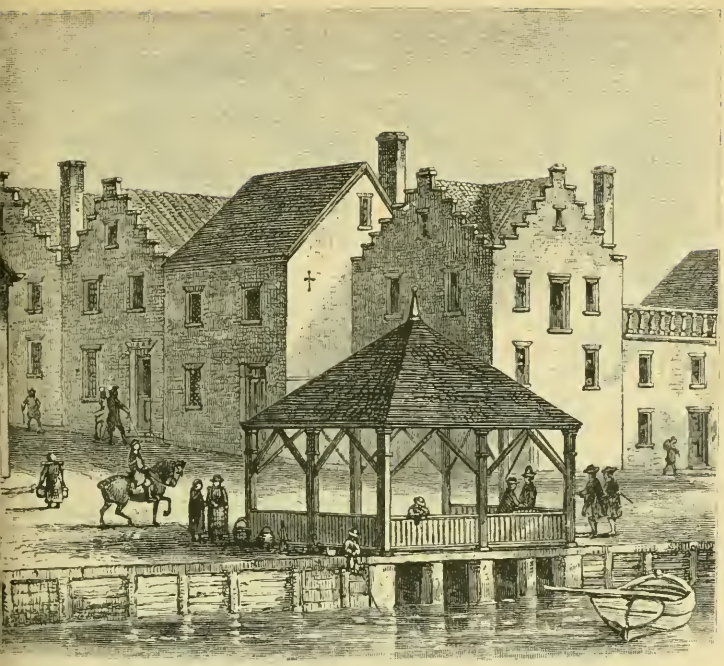
But there was a daughter whom old Francis Lewis

dearly loved, and she nearly broke his heart by marrying a British officer, Captain Robertson. Her father threatened to disinherit her; but when did love ever pay heed to either threats or bribes? The lovers sought the aid of Dr. Inglis, rector of Trinity Church, and afterwards Bishop of Nova Scotia, a devoted loyalist, and he secretly married them. Then they sailed for England, and the old man forbade mention of his daughter Ann in his presence, and crossed her name out of his will. Captain Robertson and his wife had six children, and two of their daughters married English bishops. The second daughter became the wife of the Rt. Rev. Dr. John Bird Sumner, Bishop of Chester, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Another wedded Bishop Wilson, of Calcutta.

Philip Livingston, born in the days when it was quaintly provided that "upon the Feast Day of St. Michael the Archangel yearly" the Lieutenant-governor and council should appoint the mayor, became a graduate of Yale College, but turned his attention



FOOT OF WALL STREET AND FERRY-HOUSE, 1629



FOOT OF WALL STREET AND FERRY-HOUSE, 1746

to business at once, and was elected alderman before he was thirty. Possessed of the mercantile instinct, he made money. It could not be otherwise, for he knew the value of advertising, and whatever he had for sale will be found in the newspaper columns of his day. Here, for instance, is a notice that there is "to be sold by Philip Livingston, at his store in the New Dock, near the Ferry stairs," Irish linens, black and blue peelong, needles and teakettles, breeches and spermaceti candles, pork and knee-buckles, combs and Bohea tea, brass thimbles and a cargo of choice Teneriffe wine just imported! Fancy a signer of the Declaration of Independence dealing out tape and snuff, ivory

combs, and split-horn knives and forks; and yet this was what Philip Livingston was doing when, in 1774, he was sent to the first colonial Congress at Philadelphia. Elected to each successive Congress, he died in the harness, at York, Pa., in the darkest hour of the country's need, but with a sublime faith in her future. Like Francis Lewis, he proved his faith by his works. As soon as his signature had been affixed to his country's magna charta, he sold a large part of his property to sustain the public credit. That was the way in which a New York merchant did business a century ago.

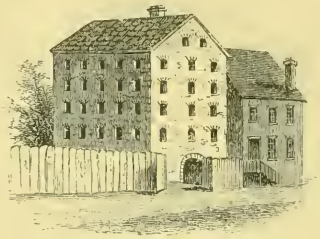
There was a noted place of resort for the patriots and politicians in those days. It was the King's Arms' Tavern, on the west side of Broadway, between what were then Crown Street and Little Prince, or Cedar and Liberty streets of the present day. Old Johnny Battin has often told me of its glories and pointed out its locality, for he, like the rest of the British officers of his day, knew all about the mysteries of its tap-room, and was full of traditions that connected Howe and Clinton and Cornwallis with its junketings. An antiquated gray-stone building whose lower windows reached down to the broad piazza in front, it had no buildings intervening between it and the Hudson, which then came nearly up to Greenwich Street. Flower-gardens filled the rear, while the front was shaded by a row of magnificent catalpas. On top was a spacious cupola, which gave a fine view from Lady Warren's country-seat at Greenwich to Staten Island, and from Paulus Hook to the Breuckelen Heights. It was up the spacious entrance to the King's Arms that Lord Cornbury rode upon his

THE SUGAR HOUSE, LIBERTY STREET

well-trained horse, and astonished the landlord by demanding a stirrup-cup in the saddle. A spacious bar-room furnished with little boxes screened by silken curtains, a still more spacious dining-room furnished with that greater rarity of a century ago, a carpet, a spacious piazza on which the beaux of the period lounged and ogled the pretty women that passed—this was the spot that cradled early meetings of the Committee of Fifty, which set the ball of the Revolution rolling in New York and began the successful rebellion against crown and king.

These pictures of the past came back to me one afternoon as the cars of the elevated railway whirled me past our one statue of a modern merchant of New York, and set me thinking of King George's broken crown, and two staid old business men of Gotham who had so far forgotten dollars and cents as to place their necks voluntarily in a halter, risking the forfeiture of all that they had of worldly goods in addition to their lives. What manner of men were they, I wondered, who could do and dare so much, and what manner of men were they, their successors, who could forget it? How many business men—how many of New York's rich men—know where sleep the ashes of Francis Lewis and Philip Livingston? Happily they made not their sacrifices to be seen of men or rewarded by them. Sweet is their sleep beneath the grasses wet by God's dews as if a nation had reared a marble pile above to pierce the skies and commemorate their patriotism. The sunshine falls upon the trees in the church-yard and dances over their resting-places, and the rain visits them with gentle touch, and they shall break from the loving arms of dear Mother

Earth just as gladly, when the trump of the last Easter sends forth its call, as though their graves had been made a point of pilgrimage for a thousand centuries. And yet—and yet—it would not be a bad thing for New York to remember the children of whom she has all reason to be proud, and whose honor is her glory.



SUGAR-HOUSE IN LIBERTY STREET

CHAPTER XXI

TEAKETTLES AS MODES OF MOTION—TWO LEAVES FROM AN OLD MERCHANT'S ITINERARY—QUAKER NOOKS AND COVENANTERS' HAUNTS—CITY FARM-HOUSES—UP BREAKNECK HILL—HARLEM LANE IN ITS GLORY—SUMMER ATTRACTIONS OF MANHATTAN STREETS

"DON'T talk to me," said my grandmother—and when that revered woman made use of this emphatic preface, I knew that something as infallible as the acts passed by the Senate and Assembly of the Medes and Persians was to follow—"don't talk to me, Felix, for I always felt that it was flying in the face of Providence to use a teakettle to travel with. Wasn't I on board the *Samson* one Fourth of July when the upper deck fell through and crushed some of my friends to death, and didn't we run over a cow and skin it when we were going to Rahway? I am out of all patience with steamboats and locomotives. No, I am not going one step out of town this summer. When I want to go into the country, I'll take the Bloomingdale omnibus and visit my friends. There's all the country I want on this side of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and I can get there without a sputtering teakettle to drag me." I confess to have grown up in these late years into my grandmother's state of mind—believing that there is no spot on earth so beautiful as this city, and having every year less inclination to leave it. I crave no distant journeyings; my heart turns to no other people. At home among the swarming streets, I would

not exchange their summer sights and sounds for Newport sands or Adirondack woods.

Speaking of journeys, here is the itinerary of two journeys made by an old merchant of this city, written by a nonagenarian hand that is lifeless now, but that had a vigorous clasp for a friend only a few short weeks ago. It is the record of his first and last journeys between New York and Philadelphia, and presents an extremely suggestive contrast. The old merchant writes:

"Previous to the year 1817 the mail service between the two cities, as almost everywhere else in the United States, was in a most unsatisfactory condition. About that time Gov. Daniel D. Tompkins set himself to establish a shorter mail route, and with this view opened the Richmond County turnpike across Staten Island, where he already owned nearly the whole of the North Shore, with the land under water and the Quarantine Ferry. About February 20, 1820, there was a severe thunder-storm, which apparently broke up the winter, as there was none to speak of afterwards, though there was plenty of disagreeably cold weather. Towards the middle of March business called me to Philadelphia, and I availed myself of Governor Tompkins's shortened route for the trip, of which here is the history: I was boarding at No. 40 Broadway, and it was a very cold, raw March morning, when, at five o'clock, I was summoned to the carriage at the door—which carriage turned out to be a great, heavy, lumbering stage-coach, in which, on entering, I found five other half-frozen passengers. We were driven down to Pier No. 1, North River, and there transferred to the steamboat *Hercules*, a veritable tub,

PEARL STREET HOUSE AND OHIO HOTEL

with no saloon nor protection on deck, and only a small unventilated cubby-hole down-stairs, called by courtesy the cabin. After a most uncomfortable passage we landed at Quarantine, Staten Island, and were placed in large four-horse stages, in which we at once started on our journey, passing over the Richmond County Turnpike, the hardest, roughest road I had ever travelled, crossing the Kill von Kull to Perth Amboy, and thence to Trenton, where we arrived after dark. The road from Perth Amboy to Trenton redeemed the Richmond Turnpike by contrast, it was so much worse. We remained at Trenton all night, for we were thoroughly exhausted and needed rest, and next morning took steamboat to Philadelphia, which we reached a little after ten o'clock, being thus enabled to deliver the mail from the New York Post-office to the office in Philadelphia in the almost incredibly short time of thirty hours. So much for the fast mail delivery in 1820. Sixty-five years afterwards, on Tuesday, May 26, 1885, at 5 P.M., I left Victoria, Vancouver's Island, British Columbia, by the Northern Pacific Railroad for New York. After a most pleasant journey I arrived at the Pavilion Hotel, New Brighton, Staten Island, on that day week, having travelled 3500 miles in seven days without the slightest feeling of fatigue. I timed the distance from Philadelphia to New York—or, rather, to the terminus at Jersey City—a few minutes less than two hours. So I have seen the time between the two cities shortened from thirty hours to two, with luxury of travel substituted for discomfort."

The old merchant has gone a longer journey since he wrote this record, and on still swifter wings than

those of steam. He loved New York, as well he might, for he had been in business here for more than sixty years, and it was a comfort to him, as the silver cord of life was loosened, to remember that his dust would rest within the city's confines, and in hearing of the tramp of its myriad feet and the roar of its sleepless traffic. In the last lines his hand penned he wrote: "I hope that in your tour you will not omit that gem of country churches, the church of my affections, where I was married in 1825, in which my children were baptized, and where wife and children, brothers and sisters, are entombed—namely, St. Mark's Church, in the Bowery. It was situated in a true bowery in those days, constituted by a succession of leafy bowers. There are no ties more binding to a feeling heart than attachment to the graves of our kindred, and I have cherished with wonderful love for more than half a century the little green church-yard that surrounds the old Bowery 'chapel' which Peter Stuyvesant built and endowed, and which his hereditary enemies afterwards consecrated to their own form of worship."

I have already spoken of this ancient and once renowned edifice, which, like old Trinity, is a landmark among a strange people who have to be taught its history—a landmark which, I trust, will never be removed. Its story is part of the city's history, and if its foundations were removed away from the region of the ancient "bouweries" of New Amsterdam, its record would be meaningless. What is needed to accentuate the good it has accomplished and is still doing is a shaft to the memory of hard-headed Peter Stuyvesant, last and most valiant of the old Dutch

Governors of the ancient Holland colony. Shaft and church together would mark the complete blending of religion and patriotism which produces the most perfect of citizens.

No, I do not go into the country for the summer. The newspapers are filled with advertisements of fresh country air, delightful sea-breezes, the joys of lake and mountain and ocean during the dog-days, but they have no attraction for me. I am content with the city, even in the heated term, for I have learned all its secrets, and know just where to turn for shelter from the torrid skies, just how to enjoy a day's outing, just when to look for the refreshing evening breeze to lift the curtain at my window. Besides, I cannot part with the streets filled with people "as trees walking," as changeful as the leaves of the forest. The country road, half-hidden by trees through which the stars shine dimly, has a charm of its own, but it cannot compare with the broad avenue in which electricity creates a second daylight, which is terraced by long lines of shop-windows glittering with the wares of all nations, and whose sidewalks present a bewildering array of the fair faces of young girls and the gentle graces of matronhood. As if there were perpetual moonlight in our parks, the shadows of the trees make a wonderful lace-work on the pathways, and long processions of lovers, seeking the ark of matrimony in pairs, as all animated creation swept into Noah's ship of fate, forever wander there, and forever reveal in their happy faces the story of our first father's love. If I could take these with me — the churches and shops, the libraries and picture-galleries, the theatres and hotels, the beehive homes, the pave-

ments, and their occupants—I might be persuaded to desert the city of my love; but until this is possible I am content to remain here in town.

What is there that I need which the city will not supply? There is no sea-breeze that blows on distant coasts that is half so sweet as that which sweeps over the Battery, and comes freighted with memory as well as health. There are no stretches of rural landscape more beautiful than those which sweep down to Kingsbridge, along the Harlem, or up beyond Manhattanville and around Fort George. I know where to find traces of village life in those ancient parts of the city that were once known as Greenwich Village and Chelsea, Bowery Village and Yorkville, but which to this generation are only handed down as a tradition. I know where to go to find the fragments of the once powerful old Scotch Presbyterian colony (who opened in this city nearly a century ago the first theological seminary which New York could boast, and in which the famous Rev. James M. Mathews, D.D., was a professor eighty years ago), and to hear droned out in the summer afternoons and evenings from old-fashioned homes, without the intervention of a "kist o' pipes," the ancient psalms in which the soul of the Covenanter delighted, and which told how

> "Moab my wash-pot is, my shoe
> I'll over Edom cast,"

and which provoked piety by putting into rhyme every verse of the Psalms, and found religious exaltation in chanting David's curious criticism of his foes:

> "They through the city like a dog
> Will grin and go about."

I know where to go to find a quiet Quaker street, whose houses have that unaffected air of repose which other homes cannot copy. Whenever I turn the corner into this haven of social rest the atmosphere seems to change, and care is left behind, and the mind grows serenely contemplative. The blinds of the houses are carefully closed — this is a peculiarity of the neighborhood; but from the doors of these homes come forth such peaceful faces, delicate types of fair maidenhood, with downcast eyes, and of happy motherhood only a shade less beautiful in its maturity of charms, as are found nowhere else.

There are old frame-houses in Orchard and Market streets which recall the time when that neighborhood was a Quaker settlement, full of gardens and orchards, with comfortable homes set in with trees and shrubbery. Old people still live who remember it as the garden spot of the city, in whose vicinity young couples of a past generation were glad to set up their household gods. Market Street, in the days of its roistering youth, was known as George Street, and had an exceedingly evil repute. A perpetual sound of revelry pervaded it, and its inhabitants were of the spider family and spared no victims whom their nets had enmeshed. The place was an eyesore to the Quakers, who, finding that the authorities would do nothing to mend matters, adopted their own measures of reform. Their plan was radical. They bought up the entire property, rebuilt some of the houses, and purified all of them, changed the name of the street to Market, and then settled down and made their homes there. It was a wonderful transformation scene, and a very suggestive one to the reformer of a later day.

If the summer sojourner in the city wishes for change of scene from bricks and mortar, I can take him to thick woods that fringe the Hudson, and that recall the time when a large portion of the island was covered by dense forests. There the primeval oak still flourishes, and the lichens yet cling to the rocks as in the days when the foot of the Weekquaesgeek warrior pressed the mosses so lightly that it failed to crush them. Between the rocks and over the fallen leaves trickles the ghost of a brook in which trout once leaped and played, and which, so tradition says, was once powerful enough to turn the wheel of a mill where it sprang into the embrace of the Hudson. Here is rest from the city's roar, and here is a solitude of nature as complete as one can find in the heart of the Adirondacks. Come with me for a walk to Tubby Hook, and before we have turned homeward you shall confess that by land or sea there is no more beautiful spot on which the sun shines. Or if you tire of the land, let us embark on the waters of the Spuyten Duyvil, and up in the creeks which are its tributaries we shall find a wilderness of marsh and shrubbery which will make us fancy that a hundred miles intervene between our boat and the guardian statue of "Justice" on the City Hall. The old King's Bridge is unchanged since the day when the Hessian allies of Great Britain under command of Knyphausen marched across it to make a raid upon the "neutral ground" of Westchester County, and the ancient hostlery of the Blue Bell presents the same appearance that it did to Lord Howe and his staff when they halted there and ordered one of his famous dinners. Towards the Hudson is the spot where the *Half Moon*

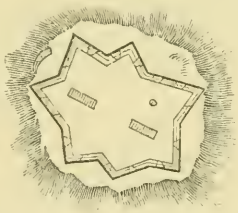
anchored and had its first battle with the Indians, and where its crew dug the first grave on the Island of Manhattan. If we turn the other way and sail beyond the steep and wooded headlands known as Washington Heights, the river brings us to a battlefield of a later day and a different kind. For at the bridge which bears his name, General Macomb dammed the Harlem River, to the great and general indignation of his neighbors. The men of lower Westchester reached such a pitch of wrath that they determined to take the war into their own hands, and marching down to the dam in a body, they removed the obstruction and let the river have free passage. Twice this was done, and then the dam ceased to exist except in name. The authorities have tried in vain to make the public patronize their title of Central Bridge; the old name, Macomb's Dam Bridge, still lingers gratefully among the natives. I remember some twenty years ago to have attended church at Mott Haven, and to have been horrified to hear the minister announce that the annual picnic of the Sunday-school would be held during the week "at the Dam Bridge."

There are bits of farm scenery on the upper part of the island which seem to have remained unchanged for a century—little oases of garden and field, with a brief stretch of country lane shaded by locust and cherry trees. It is noticeable that the houses, like the old Bussing farm-house, between One Hundred and Forty-sixth and One Hundred and Forty-seventh streets, and east of Eighth Avenue, exactly face the south, as accurately as if set by compass. The builders had the correct sanitary idea as well as a proper knowledge of comfort. These homes of a dead an-

cestry will soon be blotted out. The hand of improvement, a rough and unsentimental fist in its way, has already cut a street through Breakneck Hill, and the perils of the precipitous road over its crest have wellnigh vanished. The highest point of the hill was near the intersection of One Hundred and Forty-seventh Street with the south side of St. Nicholas Avenue, which was opened in 1871 as a prolongation of the once celebrated Harlem Lane, which ran from the intersection of Eighth Avenue with One Hundred and Twenty-third Street, diagonally to Sixth Avenue, at One Hundred and Tenth Street, on the northern end of Central Park. Harlem Lane, now St. Nicholas Avenue, was a dead level for the distance of three-quarters of a mile, and here the owners of fast horses tested their speed on pleasant afternoons, while all the sporting world looked on and wondered. The prolongation of the lane, before St. Nicholas Avenue was projected, was Eighth Avenue, then a level earth road to Macomb's Dam, where stood, a half century ago, two famous road-houses from which the glory has departed, though they still exist. Another road led out of Eighth Avenue to the left, at about One Hundred and Forty-first Street, called Breakneck Road. It ran up Breakneck Hill, and continued along until it intersected Tenth Avenue at One Hundred and Sixty-second Street, opposite the Jumel mansion, and crossing into the present Kingsbridge Road, opposite the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, kept on to Kingsbridge, two miles or more beyond. This was the steepest, most difficult and dangerous road on Manhattan Island, even more wild and precipitous than the McGowan's Pass Road at the north

end of Central Park. Several fatal accidents occurred there and almost innumerable severe ones.

Why should I go to the country for change of air, for recreation, or for comfort, so long as I have all these delights at my door, made ready for my enjoyment? No. For me the breezes shall blow from river to harbor; for me the streets shall every night put on their holiday attire; for me the green spots on this island shall shine in summer garb, and the waters that gird them in shall twinkle in the sunshine by day and dance with silver gleams by night. "Don't talk to me, Felix," said my grandmother, and I emphasize her dictum out of my own experience; "there is no spot on earth half so lovely as this city of New York."



THE INDEPENDENT BATTERY, BUNKER HILL.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ANCIENT MILL AT KINGSBRIDGE—MARCHING WITH WASHINGTON —A PATROON IN THE HAY-FIELD—GHOSTS OF OLD HOUSES—THE STRYKER AND HOPPER MANSIONS—RICHMOND HILL—THE WARREN AND SPENCER HOMESTEADS—ANCIENT EARTHWORKS

ONE of the pleasantest experiences in the life of Felix Oldboy has been the receipt of scores of letters in regard to his "Tour." Some of them contain matter which seems to be appropriate for incorporation in these papers, and which convey interesting points in local history or queer bits of mosaic that reveal traits of city life which are well worth preserving. One of recent date, signed only with initials, relates to the historic territory of Kingsbridge. The writer says:

In touching upon Inwood and the waters of the Harlem and Spuyt-den-Duyvil Creek, I hoped you would mention the old mill that once stood just to the west of Kingsbridge, and to which there was passage over the water, either from the bridge or from the New York side of the creek. I remember seeing this old mill as late as the year 1857, and I think that shortly after that date it blew down or was carried away by the waters of the Spuyt-den-Duyvil after a freshet. This mill stood on piles in the middle of the stream on lands under water granted by the Mayor and Commonalty of New York to Alexander McComb in the year 1800 at a rental of $12.50 per annum. About the year 1856 my father bought the mill and water grant at a foreclosure sale for $1650, and from that year to the present the tax has been regularly paid, though the mill has gone and all else that belonged to it except the bot-

tom of the stream, which presumably is still there. The lease from the city provides that a passageway fifteen feet wide shall be kept open, so that small boats may freely pass and repass through the bridge, and the width of the stream seems to be thus guaranteed for the future. Can you tell me who built the mill that was destroyed thirty years ago, and for what purposes was it ever used?

Whether the mill thus destroyed was the same that was built by Frederick Phillipse, Lord of the Manor, I do not know, but there was a mill there in 1759, which, with house, farm, and bridge, was "to be let, and entered upon immediately," in April of that year, on application to "the Manor of Phillipsburg, in the county of Westchester," now the city of Yonkers. Presumably the mill ground wheat and corn for the farmers of that county and of the upper part of the Island of Manhattan. My correspondent writes the name of the famous stream at Kingsbridge Spuyt-den-Duyvil, and it is curious to note the variety of spelling to which this Rubicon of Anthony the trumpeter has been subjected. Prior to 1693 there was no bridge across the stream, but in January of that year the Colonial Council met to consider the offer of Frederick Phillipse the elder to build a bridge at "Spikendevil" for the convenience of "cattell" and "waggons," as well as the general public. This was the only bridge connecting the Island of Manhattan with the mainland for sixty years. Madam Knight, in her journal

PHILLIPSE MANOR-HOUSE

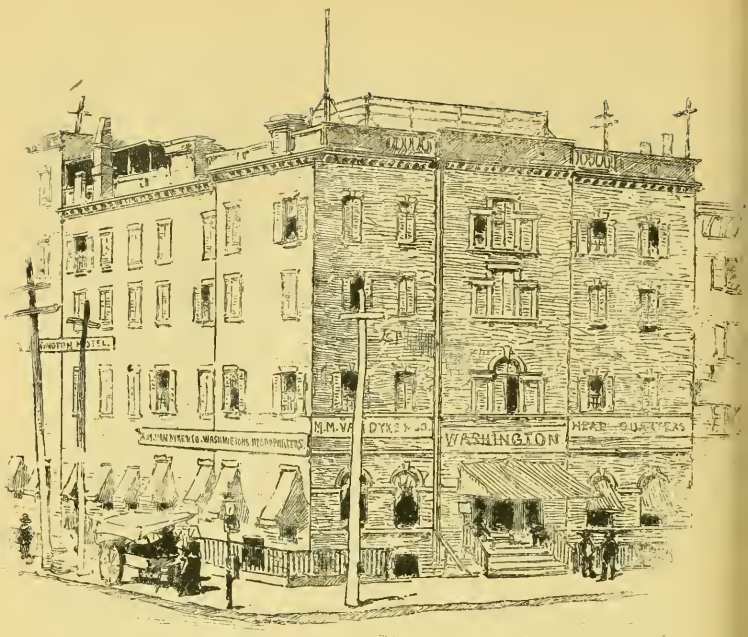
of 1704, recounting her journey from New York to New Haven in December of that year, says that about three o'clock in the afternoon "we came to the Half-way House, about ten miles out of town, where we baited and went forward, and about five came to Spiting Devil, else Kingsbridge, where they pay threepence for passing over with a horse, which the man that keeps the gate set up at the end of the bridge receives." This Half-way House stood at the bottom of the hill on the old Middle Road, about One Hundred and Seventh Street, between the line of Fifth and Sixth avenues. The only road to Boston then, and a rough one it was, led across the island to Kingsbridge, and here the gates were locked and barred at night, and people stood and knocked until a servant came from the farm-house fifteen rods distant. It was a monopoly, and a grievous one. So oppressive did it become that in 1759 Benjamin Palmer built a free bridge across the creek just above the old bridge, from Thomas Vermilia's land to the farm of Jacob Dyckman, and all New York celebrated the event by eating "a stately ox roasted whole" on the Bowling Green. This took place during the French and Indian War, and Palmer made a charge that Colonel Phillipse had him twice drafted as a soldier in order to kill the project, and compelled him to pay £5 for a substitute on the first occasion and £20 on the second. During the war for independence the British burned the free bridge in order to prevent the passage of the American army across the river, the original bridge at this point being defended by a redoubt.

It is difficult to realize that but a single generation can span all the years between the days of George

Washington and to-day, and that the sons of men who fought in the Revolution are moving among us in hale and hearty old age. Somehow, although in boyhood I have talked of those days with a score who had wielded the sword or borne the flintlock in the war for independence, the scenes and men who made our country's history in the last quarter of the last century seem to have been immeasurably removed from us by the mighty tragedy of our war between the States. But these modern memories were all swept away by a letter which has come to me from the son of an officer in the Revolutionary Army, who was a conspicuous figure in the procession that entered New York in triumph on November 25, 1783, the day of the city's evacuation by the British troops. Col. Christian S. Delavan writes me:

> We—myself and my brothers—commenced keeping a hardware and furnishing store in the year 1826, and continued so from that year until 1849. During many of those years Peter Cooper often drove from his glue factory, in the rear of his house, north-east corner of Fourth Avenue and Twenty eighth Street, and came to have a chat with us. In your ramblings on Washington Heights you spoke of General Washington and his staff entering New York from that point, and the British withdrawing their lines as he advanced and finally embarking at the Battery. It was my father, Captain Delavan, who, with his light-horse company, led the advance of the patriot column into the city. He, with the other officers, partook of a grand dinner at the old tavern (still standing) at the corner of Pearl and Broad streets. My brother Charles and myself, fast approaching the eighties, are the only two living representatives of those who participated in that glorious event that gave us a country free from a foreign foe.

A correspondent sends the following incident, which



WASHINGTON HOUSE, FOOT OF BROADWAY

dates back half a century, as illustrative of Gouverneur Morris and his times:

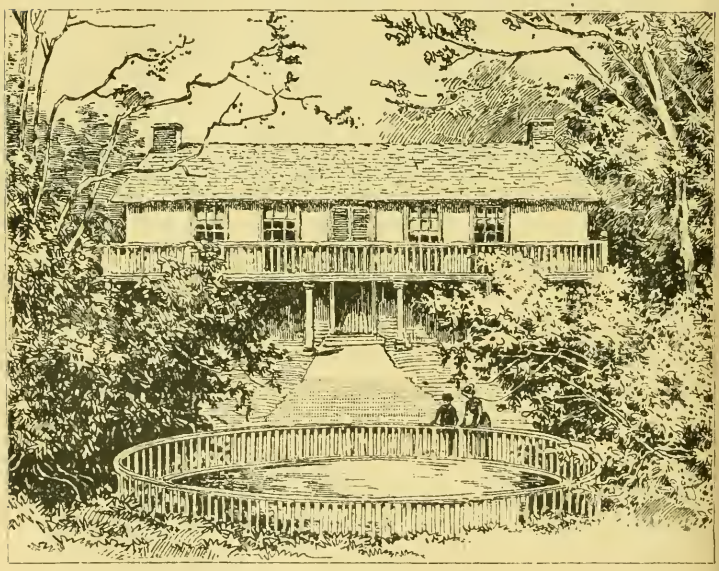
During harvest time, a few years only before your first visit to Harlem, an English nobleman whose ancestral patent of nobility dated back to the Norman Conquest, visited this country and became the guest of Judge William Jay, of Bedford, Westchester County, who entertained him most royally, also making calls with him upon the surrounding lords of the manor, such as the Livingstons, Van Rensselaers, and Schuylers to the north, and the Van Cortlandts, Morrises, and Stuyvesants to the south. One bright morning in July the patroon, Jay, with his English guest, left Bedford in the judge's travel-

ling carriage to introduce the nobleman to his brother patroon, Gouverneur Morris. They reached the Manor-house just before noon, and as they drove to the door met the patroon himself, in his shirt-sleeves, minus coat and vest, with trousers tucked into his boots and a scythe over his shoulder, rills of perspiration running down his manly face, and his lordly brow crowned with an old straw-hat with a hole in the top, through which protruded the end of a red bandanna handkerchief. At his heels were a little army of laborers, bearing their scythes, and also fresh from the meadows where they had been mowing. The welcome dinner-bell had summoned them. It was a revelation to the English nobleman, but when he had seated himself at the hospitable table of his host he forgot all about it. For Mr. Morris was a lover of the classics as well as of nature, and could not only lead the field with his scythe, but could recite whole books of Virgil by heart.

It has been a pleasure to sit down and converse on paper with these unknown correspondents, whose name is almost legion, and whose letters have been a constant source of encouragement, and also a revelation of patriotism and local pride that was totally unsuspected. Instead of being given up to money, fashion, and pleasure, the genuine New Yorker possesses underneath his quiet exterior a heart that pulsates to the history, the growth, and the grandeur of his city. He may not wear it on his sleeve, yet it is there. His patriotism, indeed, is a good deal like old Bishop Griswold's religion. When that saintly man of God was bishop of the Eastern Diocese — Massachusetts and Maine—an ardent young preacher made up his mind that as an Episcopalian the bishop must be destitute of "vital godliness," and he concluded that he would go and convert him. The bishop received him kindly, and, on making known his mission, invited him to his

study, asked him to be seated, and told him that he was ready to listen. "Bishop, have you got religion?" the young man asked, with great solemnity. "None to speak of," responded the bishop, quietly, as he sat twiddling his thumbs, as was his custom. The ardent evangelist paused, pondered, struck his colors, apologized, and left the house convinced that true religion did not consist mainly in talk.

Yesterday I stood in front of the old Stryker mansion, at the foot of Fifty-second Street and the North

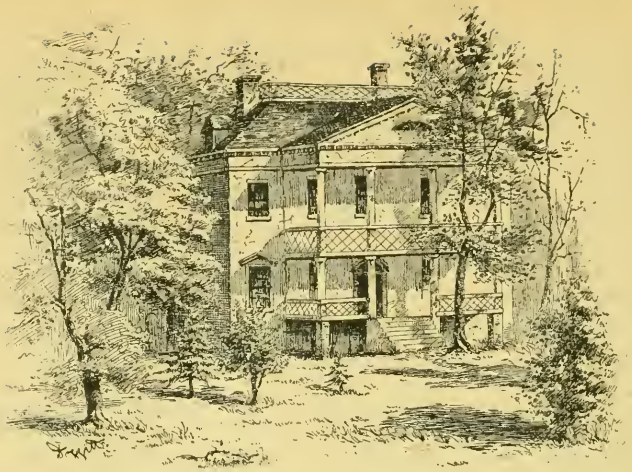


THE STRYKER HOMESTEAD

River, and marked the changes and ravages that time had wrought. I had known the house when it was the seat of an extensive and always hearty hospitali-

ty, and when it was one of the conspicuous country-seats on the lower outskirts of Bloomingdale, having a pedigree and history of its own. The old Stryker homestead still stands, but it is shorn of its former glory. Tenements and stables hedge it in on either side, and docks and lumber-yards occupy the place where its green lawn used to stretch down to the river-edge. Near by the Stryker mansion was the Hopper house. The two farms were adjoining, and the families naturally became allied by marriage. It is not ten years since the burial-ground of the Hopper family stood twenty feet above the level of the street, at the corner of Ninth Avenue and Fiftieth Street, an open, desolate, unshaded piece of ground, sown with gray tombstones, on the nearest of which the passenger could read that it was "sacred to the memory of Andrew Hopper." The stout old farmer, who had never dreamed that the little city at the lower end of the island would ever come knocking at his doors and bidding him move on, had gone comfortably to sleep in the belief that his worn-out body would rest undisturbed in the sight of the fields he had tilled and the river in which he had sported in his boyhood.

I think there is nothing sadder in the story of our famous houses than the history of Richmond Hill. Of its ancient glories I have heard from my grandmother, who had been a guest within its walls when it was the seat of culture and refinement. I remember the mansion as a ruin, when, after it had been opened for a first-class theatre, it had passed through the gradations of circus and menagerie, and finally had been abandoned. It then stood on the line of Charlton Street, some twenty feet from Varick, still wearing the adornment of por-



RICHMOND HILL

tico and columns, having been removed there from its old foundations at the intersection of those two streets. Built by Major Mortier, an English officer, ten years anterior to the Revolution, Washington with his family occupied the house in 1776, whence he removed his headquarters to the Roger Morris house, near what was then known as the Point of Rocks. Then British officers came into possession. During the first year of the Government under the Constitution, while Washington held his Republican Court in Franklin Square, Vice-president Adams occupied the Richmond Hill house and estate, of which Mrs. Adams wrote to her sister that "Nature had so lavishly displayed her beauties that she has left scarcely anything for her handmaid, Art, to perform."

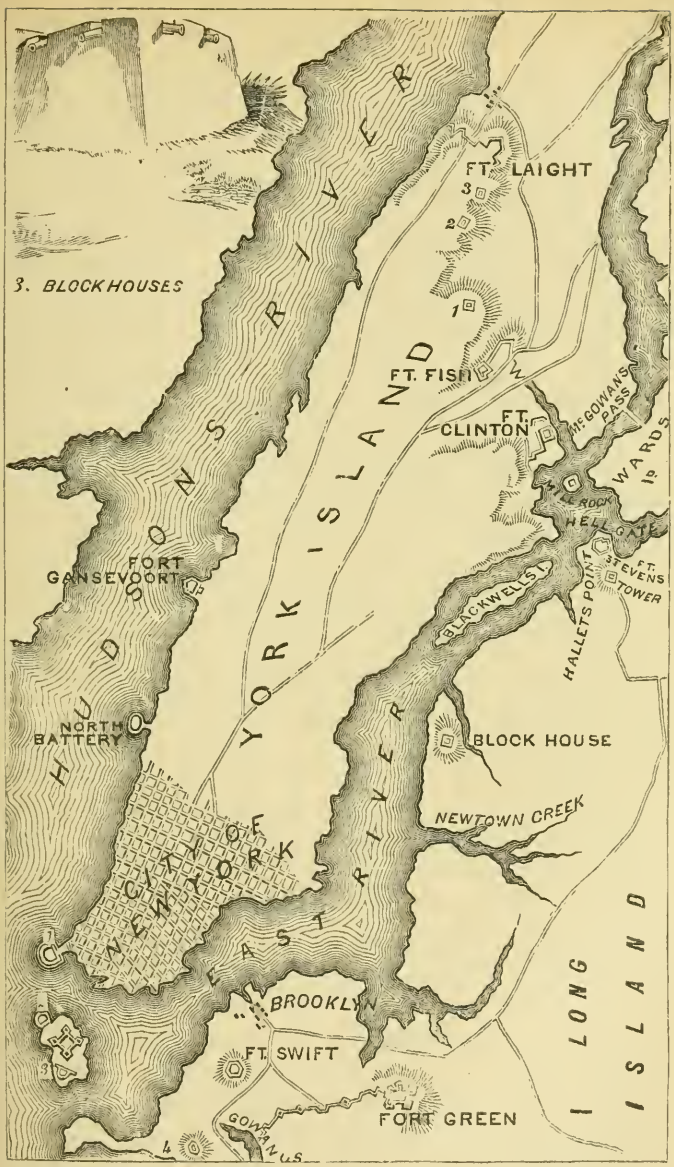
It was a beautiful spot then. In front there was nothing to obstruct the view of the Hudson. To the right fertile meadows stretched up towards the little

hamlet of Greenwich Village, and on the left the view of the little city in the distance was half hidden by clumps of trees and rising hills. There was a broad entrance to the house, under a porch of imposing height, supported by high columns, with balconies fronting the rooms of the second story. The premises were entered by a spacious gateway, flanked by ornamental columns, at what is now the termination of Macdougal Street. Within the gate and to the north was a beautiful sheet of water, known to men who are still living and who skated on its frozen surface when they were urchins of tender years, as Burr's Pond. For, after all, the chief renown of Richmond Hill is that it was for ten years the home of Aaron Burr, and that here the lovely and ill-fated Theodosia, his daughter, on whom her father lavished the love of his life, dispensed a charming hospitality. The guests were the most eminent men and women of the Old World and the New. Talleyrand, Volney, Louis Philippe, Brant, the Indian chieftain; senators, ambassadors, authors — all were alike charmed with the graceful manners of Theodosia Burr and the stately hospitality of the home over which she presided. No man in all the land was then more highly honored than Aaron Burr, Senator and Vice-president, whose military record had been brilliant beyond comparison, and to whom the country, for which he had perilled his life, delighted to point as one of its chief civic ornaments. With his fall, crushed with his daughter's loss, the glory of Richmond Hill departed forever.

Another old mansion whose features remain impressed on my memory was the house built by Admiral Sir Peter Warren in 1740 on the banks of the

Hudson, several miles away from the city. It stood near the intersection of Charles and Bleecker streets, and when it was erected and the grounds laid out, its beautiful lawns reached down to the river, and there was no other house within the radius of a mile to intercept the view. Here, when the smallpox was raging in the little city, whose outer boundary was just above Wall Street, Sir Peter Warren invited the Colonial Assembly to meet and escape the plague by adjourning to the country. The admiral, forgotten in the present day, was a great man in the colony, and quite as influential during the administration of Clinton as the Governor himself. Time could not spare the hero of Louisbourg, but it is a pity that man could not have spared the splendid avenues of locusts which Sir Peter had planted with his own hand, and which were cut down in the summer of 1865, when the old house was demolished.

In the near neighborhood of the Warren mansion was the old Spencer homestead, at the corner of Fourth and West Tenth streets. It was erected at the beginning of the century by Garrett Gilbert, a well-known character of that day, who soon ran through his fortune and put his homestead up for sale. If a spendthrift, however, he was possessed of taste, and his cottage, with its peaked roof and veranda front, was considered at the time the most beautiful of the city's suburban residences. The grounds were laid out with great taste, abounding in flowers and fruit-trees; and the fish-ponds in them, fed from a number of cisterns, were the marvel of the day. When the estate was sold, Senator Marcus Spencer became its purchaser, and the house went by his name afterwards,



1. Battery *2.* Castle Williams *3.* Governor's Island *4.* 3-Gun Battery

FORTIFICATIONS AROUND NEW YORK—1814

and is commemorated by the present Spencer Place. During the prevalence of the yellow-fever in 1822 the city Post-office was temporarily established at this building, but was subsequently removed to the corner of Asylum (now Fourth) and Bank streets. A few representatives of the magnificent trees which once surrounded the house are still standing in West Tenth Street; and after the Spencer mansion was torn down, in 1872, Dr. Hall, the Senator's son-in-law, enclosed a large portion of the old garden, which lay in the interior of the block, as a garden for his residence in West Tenth Street, and there it still lies hidden from the public eye, bright with flowers and shaded by ancient trees, a mute memorial of the last of the old homesteads below the homes of the Strykers and Hoppers.

If the old historic houses of New York cannot be preserved, and all seem doomed to pass under the hammer of the auctioneer, it would appear that measures ought to be taken to preserve the relics of old Revolutionary fortifications. A generation ago the upper part of the island was fairly covered with the remains of earthworks and redoubts, most of them outlined with much distinctness; and there are octogenarian citizens still living who as boys played in the ditches and on the embankments of the fort erected on the hill just west of Broadway, between Spring and Prince streets. The hand of the builder has levelled most of these remains. Tenth Avenue, at Two Hundred and Twenty-sixth Street, runs through the site of Fort Prince, which guarded the approaches to Kings' Bridge. The redoubts that crossed Eleventh and Twelfth avenues at One Hundred and Sixtieth street have disappeared, as has also Cock Hill Fort, that

overlooked Spuyten Duyvil Creek at Two Hundred and Seventeenth Street. On Washington Heights are still to be seen the grassy embankments that marked the Citadel of Fort Washington, captured by the British, and rechristened Fort Knyphausen in honor of the Hessian general whose mercenaries had led the storming party, and the outlines of Fort Tryon, half a mile above, can also be traced. It will be a pity if those who have charge of what they are pleased to style street improvements are permitted to obliterate these monuments of our past glory, and the home of the parvenu shall cover the spot where bayonets were crossed in deadly conflict, and the men of '76 fell in slaughtered heaps in defence of the liberties of the colonies.

The Revolutionary fortifications that stretched from the mouth of Turtle Creek up through McGowan's Pass disappeared long ago, and the later earthworks thrown up there in 1812, and which I remember to have seen in my boyhood, have also gone the way of the past. There are men still living who helped to erect these fortifications, and who have lived to see their demolition. Not many of these veterans are left, but we old boys can remember when they were of little account, and the survivors of the war of the Revolution were looked upon as the country's real heroes. One of these soldiers of three-quarters of a century ago, Col. Charles B. Tappan, belonged to the volunteer company commanded by Capt. (afterwards Judge) Robert Emmett. He has a very vivid recollection of the march to Yorkville Heights, where they were ordered to report at sunrise, and of digging intrenchments by day in the hot sun and mounting

guard on dark and rainy nights. Every able-bodied man from the age of eighteen to forty-five was required to attend daily drill, and 28,000 men were constantly under arms to repel an invasion of the enemy. Another old friend, who was a butcher's apprentice in those stirring days, pointed out to me in after-years the remains of a redoubt which he had helped to build on the right of McGowan's Pass. It seems that the boys became inoculated with the martial fever, and they held a meeting in Bayard Street, where fiery speeches were made and resolutions were passed offering the services of one hundred boys, ready to march at the beat of the drum. Their proffer was accepted, and at six o'clock in the morning, with colors flying, a band of music playing, and citizens shouting, the bold soldier boys set out for the front—at Yorkville. They had not forgotten creature comforts, for a huge wagon followed them laden with the best that the market afforded. Breakfast was first in order, and then the boys set to work in earnest, and at sunset had thrown up a breastwork one hundred feet in length, twenty in breadth, and four feet high, sodded completely. In the centre of the ramparts the boys set their flag, which bore on its white ground the inscription:

> "Free trade and butchers' rights,
> From Brooklyn's Fields to Harlem Heights."

Then, having hailed it with nine hearty cheers, they marched back to the Bowery, with drums beating and colors flying, and ate and slept as only boys can.

CHAPTER XXIII

POLITICIANS OF THE OLDEN TIME—SAMUEL SWARTWOUT'S STRANGE CAREER—THURLOW WEED AND HORATIO SEYMOUR—STATESMEN OF THE NEW SCHOOL—HARMONY IN OLD TAMMANY HALL

A BIT of wisdom which fell from the lips of Mr. Pickwick, and which Count Smorltork eagerly caught up and transferred to his tablets as "ver good—fine words to begin a chapter," read in its transferred condition as follows: "The word poltic surprises by himself 'a difficult study of no inconsiderable magnitude.'" While this is true, no reminiscence of the city of half a century ago would be complete that did not revive the memories of the politicians of that day. They are worth remembering, too. "There were giants in the earth in those days," and zealous partisans though they were, their patriotism no less than their abilities made them men of mark in the land. De Witt Clinton thought it an honor to be an alderman of New York, and when the Golden Age returns, in which such men as he shall again be willing to take up the burdens of office, the era of political rings and jobs will pass away.

"Old Hickory," "the Fox of Kinderhook," "Tippecanoe and Tyler too," and "the Mill Boy of the Slashes" are among my early recollections of political badges and war cries. I remember often to have seen famous Sam Swartwout, whom Andrew Jackson be-

queathed as a legacy to his successor, extracting a promise from Mr. Van Buren that he should not be disturbed in his office of Collector of the Port until his term had expired. Of colossal build, erect, and straight as an arrow—until age had bent his stalwart form a little in ripening it for death's harvest—Sam Swartwout was a man of mark when he passed along the street. He came of Revolutionary stock, and with his two brothers served in the War of 1812. They dealt extensively in paints and dyewoods, and almost as largely in politics. John, the oldest brother, was appointed United States Marshal for this district by President Jefferson, but was removed by the latter at the beginning of his second term, when he made a clean sweep of all the friends of Aaron Burr, to whom, when he was Vice-president, he had assigned the New York appointments. This made trouble at once. John Swartwout challenged De Witt Clinton to mortal combat, and they met on the old duelling-ground at Hoboken. The challenger was brought home with a bullet in his thigh. Richard Riker, afterwards Recorder of the city, and known in political and social tradition as "Dickey" Riker, made some unpalatable criticism upon the matter, and was promptly challenged by Robert Swartwout. They met on the field of honor across the Hudson, and Mr. Riker was wounded so severely that he limped to the close of his life. It was an era of personal responsibility. Men were held to strict account for their criticism of contemporaries, and such an exchange of epithets as in these later days at times distinguishes our deliberative bodies would then have led to a fusillade that would have made a battle-field of City Hall or State Capitol. The

invitation to step over to Hoboken and adjust matters with a pair of pistols : as, of course, a barbarity, but it led to a remarkable politeness and a discriminating choice of words in public speech or written document. Even then a challenge was liable to be sent on general principles, and it could not be refused. Bernard, the actor, in his autobiographical account of a visit paid to New York in the early part of the century, speaks of a call made upon him at his hotel by Mr. Coleman, editor of *The Evening Post*. After an hour's pleasant chat, the editor excused himself on the score of an engagement, and it was not until the next day that Mr. Bernard learned that the engagement in question was an invitation to fight a duel at Hoboken. It was a matter of course, the custom of the day; and politicians, journalists, and even men of business (like Robert Swartwout, who was a merchant, and was wedded to Miss Dunscombe at the house of his brother-in-law, Philip Hone), were ready to maintain their opinions with powder and ball.

At this time Samuel Swartwout, the youngest of the brothers, was in the South with Aaron Burr. Devoted to the fortunes of that adventurous pioneer of a new empire, he had gone with him to the Southwest to assist in setting up a new field of rule and conquest on the Mexican border. When Burr was on trial at Richmond, Samuel Swartwout was there as his private secretary and friend, and became the sharer of his prison. As ready as his brothers for the trial by combat, he sent a challenge to General Wilkinson, and when the latter declined to receive it, on the ground that he would not hold correspondence with traitors and conspirators, the ardent challenger prompt-

ly posted him as a coward and poltroon. Released and returning to this city, he served in 1812 as adjutant of the celebrated Irish Greens, and afterwards did duty on the staff of General Jackson at the battle of New Orleans. It was the friendship which Jackson conceived for stalwart Sam Swartwout that made the latter Collector of the Port, and kept him in office eight years in spite of the protests of Tammany Hall. When it came to the case of his personal friends, "Old Hickory" was immovable.

I never cross the meadows beyond Bergen Hill but the memory of the Swartwouts comes back to me. They dreamed, seventy years ago, that these meadows might be reclaimed and made a vast market-garden to supply the metropolis. With them to think was to act. They purchased 4200 acres of the salt-marsh in 1815. It was subject to overflow by the tides and was mostly under water. Business men regarded the scheme as visionary and would have nothing to do with it. But the brothers were rich men for that day, and John Swartwout did not hesitate to embark every penny of his $200,000 in the speculation. They went sturdily to work, built ten miles of embankment, dug 100 miles of ditch, reclaimed 1500 acres of solid ground, and announced that they would raise upon these resurrected fields all the vegetables that would ever be needed in New York. Three years of this work absorbed their money and broke up their regular business. But Robert secured the appointment of Naval Agent, and the brothers went ahead with unwavering faith. At the close of another year they applied to the city corporation for aid, but it was refused. Then, still believing that there were "millions

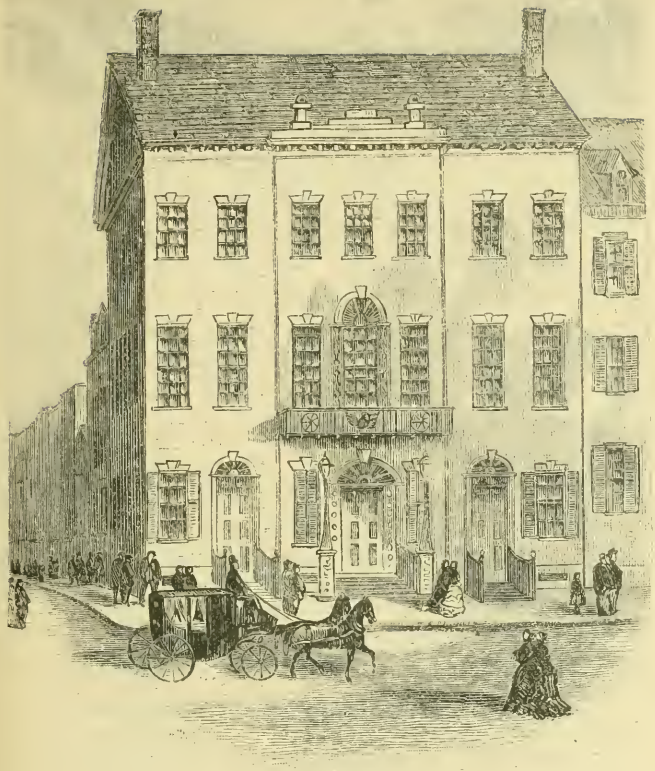
in it," they mortgaged everything and kept on. As a last resort, they sent their maps and plans to Holland, in the hope that they would interest the Dutch devotees of canals, but this proved a failure also. The brothers were impoverished, and the swamp—except the district they reclaimed—is still a prey to the sea. When in summer the train dashes across the miles of swamp land beyond Hoboken, and the long, salt grass, jewelled with wild flowers of brilliant hue, sways and tosses to the breath of the wind, it seems to me as I look out from the car window as if the wild roses and the meadow-grasses were growing over the graves of those buried hopes of seventy years ago. Perhaps, though, like all such failures, it is but the seed of future success. The pioneer never reaps the harvest.

Another old-time politician whom I remember was Churchill C. Cambreling. One of the most distinguished of the commercial representatives of the city in his day, he has been forgotten this many a year. Courteous, refined, and accomplished, few men of his day exerted a more powerful influence here or at Washington. Nine times he was elected to Congress, where he served on the most important committees, and Monroe, Jackson, and Van Buren eagerly sought his aid and counsel. President Van Buren appointed him Minister to Russia, and this was the close of his political career. I have instanced the case of Mr. Cambreling to show how fleeting is political fame. The man whom the whole city delighted to honor has now no place in the city's memory. His successor in Congress, Mike Walsh, has been better remembered, and traditions of his political powers are still told

around the watch-fires of the clans. It was he who said that "Any dead fish can swim with the current, but it takes a live fish to swim against it," and that "It requires more statesmanship to cross Broadway at Fulton Street than to be a Representative in Congress from a rural district."

Forty years ago I met Thurlow Weed for the first time, in the island of Santa Cruz, where he was wintering for his health, and had interested himself in the emancipation of the slaves in that island. Outside of politics, I knew him well afterwards. On the subject of politics he was inscrutable. He counselled with no one, but made his own plans and had them executed. Whether his influence was for good or evil is not a matter for discussion here. In his peculiar role of Warwick the king-maker he has had no successor. I found him at his best in his talks about literature.

When wise King Solomon remarked that there was nothing new under the sun, he might have included politics, though politics was not much of a business in his day. Thrones sometimes went the way of a Broadway railroad franchise, and were privately sold to the highest bidder, but the sword usually settled all disputes. This latter method had the advantage of largely reducing the number of political aspirants and of occasionally exterminating the entire opposition, root and branch, or, speaking politically, primary and convention — thus leaving quiet folk a better chance of fireside peace and comfort. In our day history continually repeats itself in politics as in other phases of public life. Prophets have arisen who proclaim the wonderful discovery of a new and original panacea for the ills of mankind. They promise to



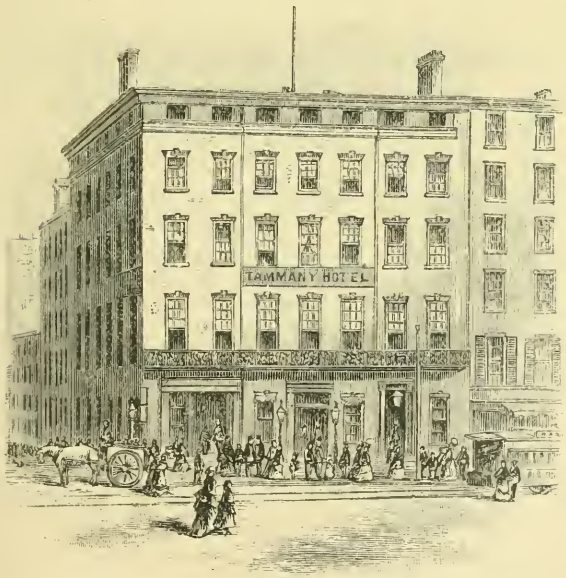
TAMMANY HALL, 1811

abolish poverty, to banish thorns and thistles, and make the land bring forth nothing but grapes and olives, and to create a millennium through the ballot. They feed on ashes. Their pretended patent is but the antiquated prescription of dead and buried quacks —moth-eaten and ghostly in its flimsiness. Sixty years ago, in 1827, Fanny Wright, the famous free-

thinker and land-reformer, and William Cobbett, the radical writer and member of the British Parliament, came to New York and ventilated their peculiar views to large audiences that were chiefly composed of artisans and laborers. Their promise of a restored Eden, in which land and wealth should be held in common, was so captivating that they were able to organize an enthusiastic Labor Party in this city, which was so successful that it sent Ely Moore to Congress as its standard-bearer. But in two or three years it ceased to exist as an organization, having become merged into the old Jacksonian Democratic Party, upon whose policy it ingrafted in some measure its peculiar political views. A similar fate is likely to befall the present labor movement—or at least that part of it which proposes to undertake the job of reforming that portion of creation which President Zachary Taylor designated as "all the world and the rest of mankind." What the genius of Fanny Wright and the brain of William Cobbett could not compass cannot be accomplished by the words of Powderly and McGlynn, of Henry George and Lucy Parsons.

Horatio Seymour used to say that the City of New York was a State by itself, entirely distinct in its interests and customs from the rural districts of the interior. "I have always advised candidates for State or Federal offices who do not belong in the city," he said to me, "to keep away from New York while their campaign was in progress—a piece of advice which I always followed in my own case." Yet he had a great admiration for the metropolis, and the number of his friends here was legion. I recall a summer afternoon when I sat with him on the porch of his home upon

the slope of the Deerfield Hills, looking up and down the lovely panorama of the Mohawk Valley — the grandest highway of nations in the world—when he gave me a characteristic chapter of his experience at the hands of Tammany Hall. "I had opposed Tammany," he said, "in the nomination of a Judge of the Court of Appeals, and they had been defeated. The leaders left the Convention vowing vengeance. Later in the campaign I accepted an invitation to speak in Tammany Hall, and though anticipating a disturbance, there was nothing else to be done but to go. When the night came the hall was crowded. I remarked to Captain Rynders that possibly there would be trouble when I spoke, but he replied that there was no dan-



TAMMANY HALL IN LATER TIMES

ger, that unity was the rule and harmony must be preserved. As I rose to speak there was considerable disturbance in the rear of the hall. At the same time I noticed a line of men extending from each farther corner of the room to a point in the centre. Each man held his silk hat in one hand above the heads of the crowd, and as the wedge-shaped line gradually fell back there was more room and better order. After it was over I asked Captain Rynders what was the meaning of the movement. It appears that the line of men with silk hats held aloft was a phalanx of select shoulder-hitters, who preserved the unities of their hats with the left hand and hit out with the right. They had forced the malcontents to the rear, then closed their lines upon them, pushed them back to the door, and threw them down-stairs. It was accomplished so quietly and effectively that the disturbing element found itself in the middle of the street before it had a chance to make a demonstration. 'No,' said Captain Rynders to me, reflectively, 'we never have any trouble—unity is the rule and harmony must be preserved.' 'But don't you have a feud afterwards?' 'Bless your heart, no, Governor; those same men crept up-stairs afterwards like so many little lambs and listened to you quietly to the end. Harmony was preserved, you see.'"

CHAPTER XXIV

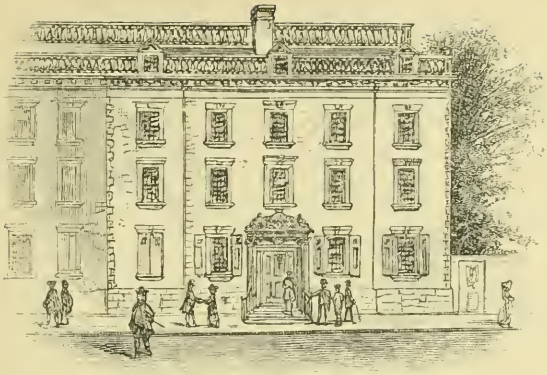
PUBLIC OPINION OPPOSED TO BANKS — BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE SYSTEM—THE YELLOW-FEVER TERROR—PERSONAL REMINISCENCES —ORIGIN OF SOME NEW YORK BANKS—CIRCUMVENTING THE LEGISLATURE—WILD-CAT BANKING

BETWEEN the first establishment of a banking institution in this country and the national banking system lies an experience in finance that is as wonderful as anything else in our history. In hunting it out, the chief miracle seems to be that the land was able to achieve even the least prosperity. At the beginning of this century there was an almost unanimous opposition to banks; now it seems to be a prevailing opinion that the more we have the merrier.

It was Philadelphia that set New York the example of creating a bank of discount and deposit. The Bank of North America, originated by Robert Morris, Superintendent of Finance for the United States, was incorporated by Congress in 1781 and by the State of Pennsylvania a few months later in the same year. But nothing could be done in New York while the British held possession of the city, and it was not until November 25, 1783, that the English soldiers finally disembarked, taking with them thousands of Tory refugees. Philadelphia had a population of forty thousand at that time, and was regarded as the future capital of the colonies, since Congress always held its

sessions there. New York was but the shadow of the flourishing city of 1776. Its patriotic citizens returned to find its homes dismantled or destroyed by fire, its churches turned into riding-schools or hospitals, and its commerce gone. But the spirit of its people was indomitable. Though the population of the city numbered but twenty thousand, and the business men had been largely impoverished by the war, a movement was started at once looking to the creation of a bank. Money was scarce, and it was at first proposed that subscriptions should be made with one-third money and two-thirds mortgages or deeds of trust on land in New York and New Jersey. Happily wiser counsels prevailed, and at a meeting held in the Merchants' Coffee House on February 26, 1784, the Bank of New York was organized, with a capital stock of $500,000 in gold and silver. Major-general Alexander McDougall, a gallant soldier of the Revolution, and President of the Society of the Cincinnati, was elected President, and William Seton, a shipping merchant whose sympathies were with the royal side, and who had remained in New York throughout the war, was made cashier. In the first list of directors are the names of Alexander Hamilton, Comfort Sands, Thomas Randall, Nicholas Law, Isaac Roosevelt, and others almost equally well known in the early financial and commercial history of the city. Alexander Hamilton drew up the constitution and gave Mr. Seton, who was not familiar with the forms of banking business, a letter to the cashier of the bank in Philadelphia where he had gone to procure "materials and information."

The bank began business at the old Walton House



OLD WALTON HOUSE IN 1776

on St. George's Square, now known as Franklin Square, but in 1798 it was removed to the corner of Wall and William streets, the same site which it now occupies. Wall Street was then largely a street of private residences. Alexander Hamilton had his modest house upon part of the present site of the Mechanics' Bank, and near by lived the Verplancks, Ludlows, Marstons, and other families of social prominence. The dry-goods and millinery stores were in William Street, where the ladies did their shopping. There was considerable opposition in the Legislature to the incorporation of banking institutions, and the petition which the Bank of New York presented in 1789 was unheeded, and while the Assembly of 1790 (in which my grandfather's grandfather was member from the great county of Ontario, which then embraced the western half of the State) passed an act of incorporation for the bank, it was defeated in the Senate by the casting vote of the Chairman. A year later the

bank was successful, and under these new auspices it took a fresh lease of life, with a capital of $900,000 and with Washington's Secretary of the Treasury as its friend and adviser. But even great men are short-sighted, and on January 18, 1791, I find Alexander Hamilton writing to Cashier Seton that he has "learned with infinite pain the circumstance of a new bank having started up in your city. Its effects cannot but be in every way pernicious. These extravagant sallies of speculation do injury to the Government and to the whole system of public credit, by disgusting all sober citizens and giving a wild air to everything." But the proposed Million Bank, which Hamilton elsewhere designates as a "newly engendered monster," failed to obtain a charter, and was never organized for business.

The whole city appears to have subscribed for the five-hundred-dollar shares of the Bank of New York when they were placed on the market. Among the stockholders in 1784 I find the names of Herman Le Roy, Thomas Ludlow, Robert Lenox, Peter Keteltas, John Delafield, Gulian Verplanck, Anthony S. Bleecker, Peter Schermerhorn, Richard Varick, Gouverneur Kemble, John Alsop, Josiah Ogden Hoffman, Gilbert Aspinwall, John Suydam, and Anthony A. Rutgers—a brave showing of old colonial blood. The extremes of subscriptions were those of Temperance Green, who took twenty-five shares, and the Black Friars' Society, which was enrolled for a one-half share. The second name on the list was that of Alexander Hamilton, a subscriber for one share and a half, and the third is that of Aaron Burr, who took three shares. It was a natural sequence of names in that day; in these later

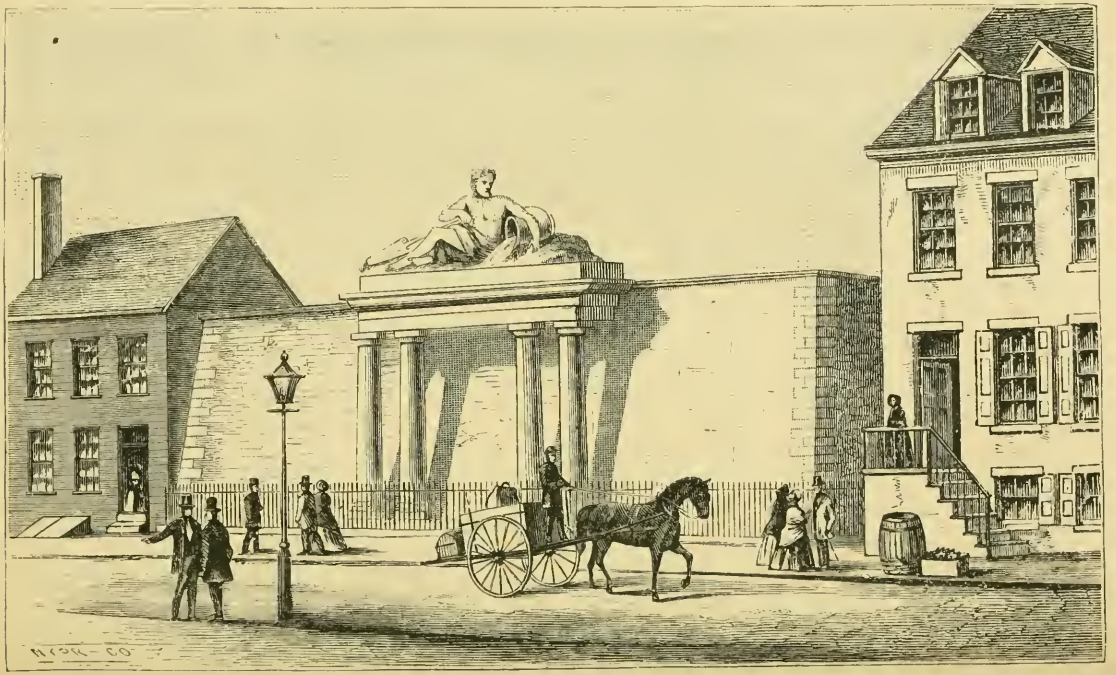
times it looks familiar and significant. On the same roll I find the name of Abraham Bradley, a near relative of my ancestral member from Ontario, who was appointed Assistant Postmaster-general by President Washington, and held the office for forty years. And there is one name there of a white-haired soldier of the Revolution who used to take me on his knee, and tell me of the wild charge upon the Hessians at Trenton, and the glorious surrender at Yorktown—Major Jonathan Lawrence. So, when I have told my little boy — the Benjamin of our quiet household — of the carnage I witnessed at Malvern Hill and Spottsylvania, I can also give him, as I heard it from living lips, the story of the long, dark years that stretched

TONTINE COFFEE-HOUSE

between the fight at Lexington and the evacuation of New York.

Notwithstanding the financial success of the Bank of New York and its acknowledged convenience to the public, there was wide-spread popular prejudice against the establishment of more banks. The farmers were an important and growing element in the State, and they were possessed with the idea that the money placed in banks was just so much withdrawn from circulation in the community. A branch of the United States Bank had been established in New York City, and these two institutions were judged to be sufficient for business purposes for many years to come. But as it is the unexpected which always happens, so an unforeseen occurrence paved the way to the incorporation of other banks. The yellow-fever visited New York in 1798, and one of its earliest victims was a book-keeper in the Bank of New York. Fearing another visitation of the pestilence, the bank made arrangements with the branch Bank of the United States to purchase two plots of eight city lots each, in Greenwich Village, far away from the city proper, to which they could remove in case of being placed in danger of quarantine. Here two houses were erected in the spring of 1799, and here the banks were removed in September of that year, giving their name, Bank Street, to the little village lane that had been nameless before. The last removal was made in 1822, when the yellow-fever raged with unusual virulence, and the plot, which had been purchased for $500, was sold in 1843 for $30,000.

It would be scarcely possible to exaggerate the terror which pervaded the city during the prevalence of



MANHATTAN WATER-WORKS, CHAMBERS STREET

(From *The History of the City of New York* by Mary L. Booth. Published by E. P. Dutton & Co.)

the yellow-fever. Colonel Tappan, whose home was then in Orchard Street, tells me that an iron chain was stretched across the streets at the Brick Church, which marked the boundaries of the quarantine, and he has a vivid recollection of the sudden and appalling inroads of the pestilence upon the ranks of his stalwart young contemporaries. An old New Yorker, who was born in Greenwich Village in the first year of the century, and who, as I write, in the same spot is passing peacefully down to the grave, remembers that during one fever summer a hotel of rough boards, capable of holding 500 guests, had gone up between Saturday and Monday in a field where the ripe wheat was waving on Saturday. The city was without sewerage. Great gutters, that ran through the centre of the streets, collected the refuse instead of carrying it off, and left it festering in the sun. Pigs roamed at large, and cattle were driven home to the stables from the pasture lots near Canal Street. Pestilence was the natural result of the city's accumulated filth, and it was equally natural that a desire for sanitary reform should follow in its turn. In this sanitary revolution Aaron Burr saw his financial opportunity, and whispered it to some of the leading merchants of the city. The result was that a bill was presented to the Legislature in 1799 chartering a company with a capital of $2,000,000 for the purpose of introducing pure water into the City of New York. This was all well enough so far, but the true intent of the scheme lay in a clause providing that the surplus capital might be employed in "moneyed transactions or operations not inconsistent with the laws and Constitution of the State of New York." The scheme

worked well, owing to Burr's sagacious leadership, and the Legislature passed the bill, with real or pretended ignorance of the effect of the measure. That effect was speedily seen, for soon after its charter was secured notice was given that the Manhattan Company would begin banking operations in September of that year with a capital of $500,000.

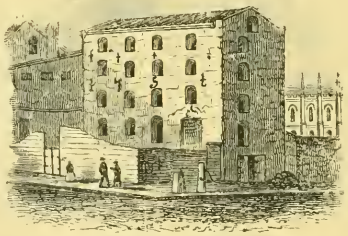
This was the only way to flank a bitter and unreasoning popular prejudice. Legislatures were as flexible in that era as now, and the lobby was as potent if less numerous. Chemical works, ship-building yards, and other pretexts were used to charter additional banks. The great bank buildings which now make Wall Street magnificent are a glory to this city and a testimony of what may be accomplished by financial genius and integrity. One of these has been erected by the Gallatin Bank, which honored itself in exchanging its old name of National Bank to one which keeps green the memory of the greatest Secretary of the Treasury of this century. In the sixty years of its existence this bank has had but three presidents, Albert Gallatin, his son, James Gallatin, and the present occupant of the chair, Frederick D. Tappan. A portrait of the first president is worth a visit to see, so nobly does it typify the great men who built up the young republic into stalwart manhood.

These banks of an older day have had their defeats as well as their victories. There lies before me a little newspaper, yellowed by age, that was issued May 10, 1837, at the crisis of the great panic. The day before, the Chemical Bank, the "pet" of the editor, had suspended specie payments, and twenty-two others had kept it company. The community had lost its

head in some respects. The worthy Mayor had camped a regiment of infantry in the City Hall Park, and by way of a further precaution against outbreak he absurdly sent several men into Wall Street, bearing aloft plaster busts of the immortal Washington. The National Theatre advertised to take notes of all State banks at par, and to give season tickets in exchange. "By gar," said a Frenchman who read the notice; "dat is good. I have forty dollar—ah, ah—I shall no lose my moneys now." "Keep cool," is the editor's advice. "The banks will resume payment; Martin Van Buren will be turned out of office, and all will be well." How splendidly our city banks weathered this financial hurricane is now a matter of history.

One of the first newspaper pictures that I remember to have seen represented the interior of a wildcat bank in Indiana. Leaning across the counter, the cashier was handing a $1 bill to a small boy with the impressive exhortation, "Here, boy, run to the corner and get me a dollar's worth of silver change. I expect the bank examiner to-day, and we must have some silver to show him." Endless was the bother in my boyhood days about uncurrent money, counterfeit detectors, and bills of doubtful value. Each State was so jealous of its own currency that even the great State of Pennsylvania passed a law placing a fine of $5 on any person who attempted to put in circulation the bank-bills of another State. I remember that once when I was a lad at school in Burlington, N. J., I went to Philadelphia to have a tooth extracted. An exceedingly benevolent-looking gentleman in clerical black nearly murdered me in ac-

complishing the feat of extracting the molar, and I felt that he amply deserved his fee of fifty cents. In the confiding innocence of early youth, I handed him a $2 bill upon one of the oldest and safest banks in the City of New York. The good man looked at it sternly, glanced at me sadly, and then remarked: "Did you know that there is a fine of $5 for attempting to pass New York currency in this State?" "No," replied I, with a blush and a shudder. And what said the good man? With a brand-new glow of benevolence on his serene countenance, he remarked, generously and gushingly: "Well, my boy, I will protect you. I will keep the bill myself. Good-bye!" Often since that time I have been led to apply to the two cities a remark which a friend was accustomed to apply to Hartford and Providence. "They're a little more pious in Philadelphia, but they're a little more honest in New York."



VAN CORTLANDT'S SUGAR HOUSE

CHAPTER XXV

PUDDING ROCK—AN ANCIENT SCHOOL-HOUSE—A TEMPERANCE HAMLET GONE WRONG — LANDMARKS AND MEMORIES OF THE NEW PARKS — VAN CORTLANDT AND PELHAM BAY — THE UNKNOWN LAND OF THE BRONX—RURAL SCENES IN A CITY'S BOUNDARIES

SWEET are the uses of—advertising. So the poet did not sing; but this is the theme of the brush as the peripatetic artist wields it on rock and cliff, whose bare, bold beauty even the mosses and lichens have spared. It is bad enough to become interested in a newspaper paragraph only to find it a snare to lead the unwary on in the direction of a plaster or pill, but to settle one's self back in a luxurious palace-car chair and prepare for the enjoyment of a delicious bit of rocky scenery, and then to find the foreground ruined by sprawling displays of the advertiser's art scattered over every available surface of smooth stone, implies one of the impertinences of humanity which are not to be forgiven in this world or in the next. An old preceptor of mine used to say, "The boy who would injure a shade tree would kill a man," and I am inclined to supplement this axiom by adding that the man who would wantonly deface a pretty touch of nature's handiwork was originally framed for a pirate. The paint-pot of this pernicious buccaneer is an unmitigated evil.

The fact that the advertising artist had exercised his diabolical ingenuity upon Pudding Rock has rec-

onciled to its departure the people of Morrisania, in whose eyes it was an historic landmark. Two months ago it stood where the glacier had deposited it, a stranger from a distant shore "centuries ago." Now it has been shattered into a thousand fragments, and it will return again to earth, to pass an existence of humble usefulness as the foundation of quiet homes. In the days of its glory it stood out in shape not unlike a pudding in a bag, and as if gathered in at the top, where a cluster of half a dozen cedars rose from its centre. Rising twenty-five feet from the ground and extending thirty feet in diameter, it was always a conspicuous object from the old Boston Post-road. Its site was between what will be One Hundred and Sixty-fifth and One Hundred and Sixty-sixth streets, at the end of Cauldwell Avenue and directly south of the handsome and hospitable residence of Mr. William Cauldwell, whose father, in 1848, built the first house erected in the new village of Morrisania. Pudding Rock had its history and traditions. In the rear was a natural fireplace, whose use the Indians had long ago discovered. Here they came to have their corn-feasts, and presumably to discuss Saddle Rock oysters and Little Neck clams, with other seasonable delicacies. For it must always be said in favor of the Indian women that they were good house-keepers and cooks, and the men had excellent appetites. When the Huguenot colonists, driven by religious persecution from beautiful France, took up their line of march along the East River and by the shores of Long Island Sound in search of a warm spot where vines would grow, and a quiet place where they might sing the Lord's songs in a strange land, they camped around

Pudding Rock and made their headquarters here for some months before they finally decided to build their New Rochelle. To them it was literally the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Afterwards it became to the settler and voyager a landmark by which distances were measured, and to travellers in the stage-coaches on the old Boston Road it was pointed out as a natural curiosity. Last of all came the geologist, with his little hammer and his big brain, and, after tapping in succession the stone and his own head, he announced that the rock was a pilgrim and a stranger, left stranded on a foreign shore by a huge glacier that had swept down from the Polar regions and then crept slowly backward to Greenland, leaving the valley of the Hudson open to the tread of the mastodon, and slowly raising the price of ice as it retired.

There are traces of a great glacial deposit extending from the line of the Harlem River up through Connecticut and beyond; and Pudding Rock, whose formation was foreign to the rocky growth of its vicinity, was not the least curious of them. Some of these deposits took the shape of "rocking-stones," and these were a source of superstitious veneration to the simple red men of other days, who were wont at intervals to gather about them and go through the mysteries of a medicine-dance. One of the most remarkable of the chain of rocking-stones is found on the old Lydig place, near West Farms. It is an immense bowlder, so nicely balanced on a rocky drift that the pressure of a strong finger will readily move it, and yet so firmly set that steam-power would be needed to drag it from its moorings. I remember that when I saw it first, years ago, the farmer in charge

of the place told me that once he had harnessed up a dozen yoke of oxen to see if he could draw it away from its position, but he found that they could not move it, and yet I put forth two fingers and easily set it rocking. The structure of the huge stone was entirely different from the trap rock on which it rested, and it was a stranger amid the geological formation of Westchester County. It had found a pleasant abiding-place on the historic old grounds through which the Bronx found its way under overhanging trees, making a scene of rural loveliness which it would be difficult to surpass. The Lydig place was once the country residence of the De Lanceys. The quaint and picturesque old homestead, built in the early part of the last century, was destroyed by fire shortly before the outbreaking of the late war; but the flames could not sweep away the ancient garden laid out in the fashion of half a century ago, the summer-houses and rustic seats, and the gracious beauty of the stately trees. Even when the brick and stone phalanxes of city blocks begin to crowd into the quiet hamlet of West Farms, they will not, as I hope and believe, be able to destroy the incomparable beauty of the Bronx River scenery, of which the denizen of New York knows all too little.

As the city sweeps up to the north and east, it is blotting out the boundary lines of the score of scattered hamlets and country cross-roads which once dotted that part of Westchester County. North New York, Wilton, and Eltona have virtually disappeared, Mott Haven has melted into Melrose, and the names of streets from the city south of the Harlem have crossed that stream and usurped the homely titles of

the old country roads of thirty and forty years ago. The story of Morrisania is the history of that active section of the city, once a portion of the "neutral territory," but now bristling with business at every street corner. It was in 1848 that the village of Morrisania was laid out. The plot was destined to be a suburban Eden. Every man was to have his acre of ground, and only eligible citizens were to be permitted to plant their domestic standards here. The village was to be strictly a temperance settlement, and neither ale nor strong drink was to be sold within its limits. Alas for the mutability of human devices! To-day it looks as if nothing but fluids were sold in Morrisania, and great breweries, which cease not to puff and labor night and day, dot its hill-sides, and move its reminiscent old settlers to wrath. Standing in their shadow, it is difficult to realize that forty years ago only fields of wheat and corn and stretches of forest trees were in sight, and that the only other signs of civilization within the horizon were a little old school-house and a winding stage road. Yet in 1848 Mr. Andrew Cauldwell built the first house in the village plot, and in the next year the colonists opened and dedicated a little union church, in which the inhabitants of this charming new paradise were to worship forever in harmony; and when the anniversary day of the settlement came around a brass band and an oration made a prodigious celebration of the event, which was rounded up by a dance at Horace Ward's old tavern at the base of Buena Ridge. The men and women who danced at the ancient hostlery that night are by no means old to-day, but it makes them feel like relics of the past when they stand in the streets of Morrisania and look about them.

Only one landmark of the past remains, now that Pudding Rock is gone. A little to the east of the old Boston Post-road, and just north of One Hundred and Fifty-sixth Street, stands a decrepit wooden building a story and a half in height, with a long, steep roof, and a porch that runs the entire length of its front. The mosses of a century seem to have gathered on the long slope of the roof, and it appears in every part to be slowly withering to decay, like a dried leaf on a November oak. Near by, at one time, Mill Creek prattled along towards the East River, over a pebbly bed and under a double line of willows, but a sewer has swallowed up the pretty brook, and the new grade of adjacent streets threatens the existence of the school-house. It was beneath this roof that the gentry of the neighborhood, including the various branches of the Morris family, whose ancient homesteads still linger in its neighborhood, received their early education. Most of the little ones, who, in the early part of the century, crept and danced along by country paths to the presence of the pedagogue who flourished a good birchen rod here, have grown old and tottered back to Mother Earth's embrace, but the frail little clap-boarded temple of learning has survived them, and still shelters life and love under its mosses. It was a desolate sort of blot on a new and dressy city landscape when I last saw it in the chill light of a November sun on a Sunday afternoon, but its desolation was far more eloquent than the sermon of a famous preacher which I heard that day.

Did I not say something about the beauty of that portion of Westchester which was annexed to this

city a few years ago? I have frequently advised travellers who were wearied alike of Mont Blanc and the Yosemite Valley to betake themselves to a carriage and explore the City of New York, not hastily and superficially, but with slow delight, and with the painstaking care that marks the botanist. In the ancient era of Peter the Headstrong, it was the talk and preparation of an entire winter to take a trip from the Bowling Green to the distant plantations of Harlem Village, or to voyage by schooner to Communipaw or through the horrible whirlpools of Hell Gate. Perhaps it might require as much determination to start on an expedition to the way-side settlement known as "Moshulu," which snuggles down in a convenient valley half a mile from Fordham; to the sleepy old farming hamlet of Bronx, over whose cluster of rustic habitations an ancient windmill, long disused and ghostly in appearance, still broods; or the little village on a knoll which is now known as Belmont, but once drew its forgotten designation from the homestead of Colonel Tompkins, the commander of the famous Tompkins Blues of lang syne. There is scarcely a thing about these places to indicate that they are a part of a great city, and, indeed, I am told that there are old people living in sight of the Bronx River, and within the corporate limits of the metropolis, who have never seen the City Hall. The horse-cars have found their way to "the village" of West Farms, as its older inhabitants love to call it, but the railway is still the only modern touch to the antiquated surroundings. The houses are old-fashioned, and have a look as if they would prove obstinately impenetrable to change. One of the most venerable of the buildings which ap-

parently date back to the last century is a two-storied frame structure, with gambrel roof and a long porch in front, which is said to have been a headquarters for Washington and his staff in the early part of the Revolutionary War. Whether this were true or not, this sleepy old village was the scene of one of the most daring exploits of Aaron Burr, who, at two o'clock in the morning of a sharp winter day, attacked a block-house erected, on the present site of the principal hotel, by Gen. Oliver de Lancey, and by the free use of hand-grenades and scaling-ladders persuaded the astonished garrison to surrender without firing a shot. At the old De Lancey mansion, too, the British officers were freely entertained, and this hospitality to a foreign foe was avenged by the burning of the country-seat of the De Lanceys in Bloomingdale during the prevalence of hostilities. These events belong to the long ago in the history of this land, but, standing in the rustic streets of West Farms, in sight of gables and shingles and mosses, one naturally reverts to the days when the hand of every man was against his neighbor in Westchester County. But athwart this blood-red landscape of the "neutral ground" there is also a glint of love and wooing, as when impetuous Aaron Burr was wafted by muffled oars across the Hudson in the darkness of the night, and dashed across country and through the pickets of the enemy to the home of the dainty widow whose heart his daring won. Even into these somnolent haunts, whose natural beauties have inspired in olden time the pens of Halleck and Drake, the brush of the advertising artist has penetrated and left a trail of disfigurement.

Many historic landmarks and legends will belong

to the nearly four thousand acres which constitute the new parks of the metropolis. Beyond, but in sight of, Kingsbridge stands a commanding eminence known as Vault Hill, where was the ancient burial-ground of the Van Cortlandts, and here, in 1776, Augustus Van Cortlandt, who held the office of Clerk of New York, concealed the public records of the city. Five years later Washington lighted extensive camp-fires on this hill and its slopes, and successfully deceived the British enemy encamped on the southern side of Spuyten Duyvil Creek, while the great body of his army was on the march to join Lafayette at Yorktown.

VAN CORTLANDT MANOR-HOUSE

At the southern extremity of the lake which bears the family name of the Van Cortlandts, an ancient mill, which has ground corn for both the friends and foes of American independence, nestles among overhanging chestnuts and elms, and looks out upon a miniature cascade and rapids, which babble to the great trees on the banks the same song they sang more than a century ago. To the north-east is an opening in the woods, where the dust of eighteen of the forty Stockbridge Indians who fell beneath British bullets while fighting on the side of the Colonists lie in one grave, still unmarked by a stone. All through this region the ploughshare and the spade of the

builder turn up cannon-balls, rusty fragments of bayonets, and other reminders of the deadly struggle which raged here for eight long years. From Kingsbridge to White Plains and from the Hudson to the Sound was one great battle-field, and the most illustrious leaders of both armies have ridden along these country roads in the times that tried the faith of our fathers.

The scenery on the banks of the Bronx River, which is the main feature of the new Bronx Park, has long been the admiration of our painters and poets, and the only circumstance which has closed the eyes of New Yorkers to its wealth of natural beauty is the fact that its loveliness lay right at their doors. These rocky ravines, wooded slopes, glades tangled with wild vines, and placid pools, should have been hidden in the Rocky Mountains or in the Adirondack region, in order to have been appreciated by those who think that a long journey is necessary in order to discover the beautiful in nature. There hangs upon the walls of my library a painting which always exacts an inquiry as to the spot it has reproduced, and rarely does the inquirer fail to express his surprise that such a scene of picturesque loveliness actually exists within the corporate bounds of New York.

There is less of historic interest attached to this immediate locality than to other portions of the neighborhood. The reason for this is akin to the tragedy of the "Three Wise Men of Gotham," who went to sea in a bowl, of whom legends make this record:

> "If the bowl had been stronger
> My story had been longer."

The quiet waters of the Bronx would have been the scene of a sanguinary naval battle had they been a little deeper. For, during the British occupancy of New York, Sir William Howe ordered the commander of the British fleet to sail up the Bronx with his fleet and guns, and annihilate certain Yankee gunboats of light draught that were making things unpleasantly warm for the Tory inhabitants thereabouts. After a

DISTANT VIEW OF THE PALISADES FROM VAN CORTLANDT PARK

brief, inglorious cruise to the mouth of the little river, the disgusted British admiral was compelled by the shallowness of the water to retire as he came, without having harvested his expected laurels. But there still stands, solitary and alone, towering to the height of 150 feet, a magnificent evergreen known as the De Lancey Pine, to recall the time when stout old Oliver De Lancey led his regiment of loyalists out to battle for the

rights of king and crown. Peace to the ashes of those brave men! The same fidelity to existing authority which made them defenders of the rights of royalty impelled their descendants nearly a century later to take up arms in support of the Union as it was.

A novelty in the way of a free sea-side resort for the weary multitudes of a great city is Pelham Bay, with a coast-line nine miles in extent, green uplands, picturesque inlets, rolling meadows, and ever-changing panorama of marine life on the Sound. Out in front lies City Island, on which the first proprietor hoped to build a great commercial city. The original lord of the manor, Thomas Pell, purchased 10,000 acres hereabouts in 1654 for a few trinkets from the Siwanoy Indians, who were a branch of the Mohicans. The red men were blotted out a century ago, and the burial mounds of the last of their sachems, Nimhan and Annhook, are still to be found on the Rapelyea estate, close to the water. They gave their name to the great rock Miskow, on Hunter's Island (a spot of rare attractiveness within the Park boundaries), and, regarding it with special veneration as a gift of Manito to his children, held annual feasts under its shadow. Pelham Neck, in another part of the Park, was the scene of a spirited battle between 4000 British troops under Lord Howe and 800 of the American militia under Colonel Glover. The latter laid an ambuscade for the redcoats, and, with a loss of only twelve men, killed or wounded 1000 of the enemy. A generation later, in 1814, two British men-of-war bombarded the Neck, and the Americans returned the compliment from their batteries. It was the last time that the

thunder of British guns was heard within the precincts of New York.

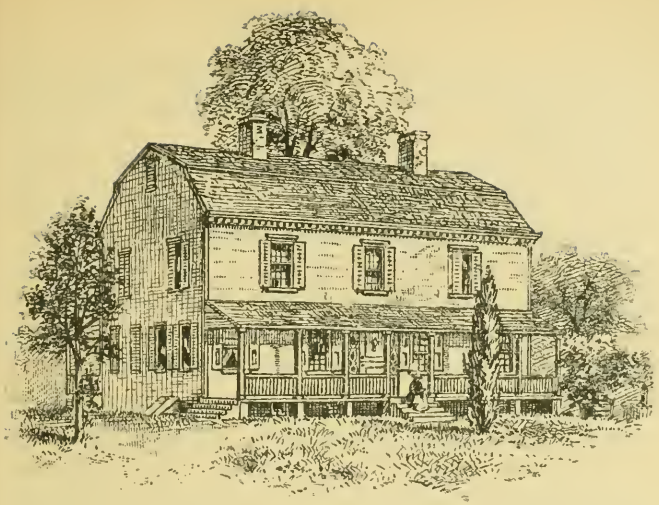
Most interesting to me of all the romance that lingers about the spot, whose very atmosphere is traditional, is the story of Anne Hutchinson's adventurous life and tragic death. Puritan intolerance had driven her from New England, and the heroic woman made her home in the wilderness that then fronted on Pelham Bay. But she was not to end her troubled days in peace. An Indian outbreak came, and she fell a victim to the tomahawk of the savages whom she had always befriended, finding toleration only in the grave. The brave, stately woman left the baptism of her name to Hutchinson River, which forms the western boundary of the Park, and its Indian designation, Acqueanoncke, has been obliterated from modern records. When Boston heard of her death, it gave devout thanks in the churches, because, in its judgment, God had made "a heavy example" of "a woful woman," but we can afford to keep her memory green. The life of brave Mistress Anne Hutchinson was pure if not gentle, and she was a pioneer of that sweet gospel of tolerance which has ever been a marked feature of the city of the Knickerbockers.

CHAPTER XXVI

MANHATTAN ISLAND — SOME ANCIENT HOMESTEADS—WORK OF THE WOODMAN'S AXE — A MYSTERY OF DRESS AND ARCHITECTURE — BLOCK-HOUSES AND EARTHWORKS—A SACRED GROVE

IN a foot-note to *The Spy*, Fenimore Cooper writes: "Every Manhattanese knows the difference between 'Manhattan Island' and 'the Island of Manhattan.' The first is applied to a small district in the vicinity of Corlaer's Hook, while the last embraces the whole island; or the city and county of New York, as it is termed in the laws." The Manhattanese of sixty years ago were well acquainted with the distinction between the titles, but to most New Yorkers of to-day the words convey no shade of difference. Indeed, I had wrongly written "Manhattan Island" on a recent occasion, when the keen eye of my editorial critic detected the lapse of memory, and I was admonished of the outbreak of wrath that might be expected from the shade of the painstaking master of fiction who in life liked no name so well as that which his personal friends frequently bestowed upon him, "The Pathfinder."

"Manhattan Island" was the name given to a high knoll of ground on the East River, above the foot of Rivington Street, containing about an acre of land, surrounded by creeks and salt-marsh, and at high tide partly covered with sea-water. Lewis Street ran about



PETERSFIELD, THE RESIDENCE OF PETRUS STUYVESANT

through the centre of it. Here were located the shipyards of Henry Eckford and other great marine architects of his day—when American enterprise, American mechanics, and American patriotism were bent on displacing the colors of other countries in the world's commercial arena with the American flag. Just north of Manhattan Island a natural creek ran up through the centre of the present Tompkins Square to the vicinity of First Avenue. The mouth of the creek lay between Manhattan Island and Burnt Mill Point, or "Branda Munah Point," as the septuagenarians of to-day used to call it when they were boys. One of these late leaves of Time's autumn tells me that the Point used to be a great swimming and fishing place, and in the hot summer days a perpetual temptation to play truant. As he first remembers the island, several creeks were crossed on small wooden bridges

to reach it, and the bridges were attainable only after a decidedly moist tramp through soggy meadows and salt-marshes.

The story of the old houses on the Island of Manhattan (few now, and growing farther between with each passing decade) can only be written by piecemeal. Families have disappeared, and their household traditions with them. Their lands have passed into the hands of strangers and speculators. Only dim legends or dusty legal conveyances remain to connect them with the past. In one case I have found it impossible to tell with certainty which of two adjacent homesteads that were of eminent repute one hundred years ago rightly represents the family which was known to have made it a centre of brilliant hospitality.

The world of to-day seems to have forgotten entirely a baronial mansion and estate that was once a feature in the rugged landscape above Harlem Plains and along the wooded heights that overlooked the river. About three-quarters of a century ago Archibald Watts erected at the eastern foot of Laurel Hill, on what is now the line of One Hundred and Forty-second Street, between Sixth and Seventh avenues, a massive stone mansion surmounted by a cupola. It was almost hidden by hill and woods from the Bloomingdale and Kingsbridge roads, and wholly shut out from the sight of travellers on Harlem Lane. The only exit was to Eighth Avenue, then a country road. Mr. Watts laid out an avenue fifty feet wide diagonally from the vicinity of One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Street to One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Street at Seventh Avenue, and at its sides set out a double row

of trees which have had a stately and inviting appearance for the last forty years, for their foliage was so thick that the noonday sun could not penetrate it. It was a veritable grove of Arcadia, bespeaking in the dog-days the slumber of Sybaris under its shade. For many years this sylvan retreat has been the resort of those who loved a tranquil walk.

At either end of the road stood, until a year or two ago, two iron gates of English ducal pattern, such as I have never seen elsewhere on the Island of Manhattan, that lent to the surroundings the air of an old-country park, and brought to mind past pilgrimages across the sea.* The old stone mansion is still standing, a swell as a spacious frame-house, erected by Mr. Watts for his son about half a century ago, and which, as it stands on higher ground, has always been observable from the west. But the old houses have begun to put on something of a skeleton air. Their luxuriant crowns of foliage have been shorn and thinned by the steel of the woodsman, and they seem to be rapidly growing to the age of those who have outlived their strength, and are waiting for the crumbling touch of the destroyer. Within the last few days the axe has levelled nearly all those ancient sons of

* This leafy lane, a pleasant sight from the cars of the Manhattan Railway, remained almost unspoiled until 1890, since which time it has been obliterated, chiefly by the great blocks of houses with cross-alleys extending from Seventh to Eighth avenue. Into the foundations of these houses have been built the stones of the walls bounding the old Watts Lane. In 1891, One Hundred and Forty-first, One Hundred and Forty-second, and One Hundred and Forty-third streets were "filled in," ten feet deep, across the meadows of the Watts farm, the former shearing away the porch of the "massive stone mansion," and the whole invasion destroying almost entirely the retirement and privacy of the place.—L.

the forest that kept guard around the old homestead, and the glare of the September sun now lights up a scene of dusty desolation where they for so long time had stood in their glory. I am not going to preach the funeral sermon over these fallen giants. It is better to tighten up my shoestrings, grasp my cane a little more firmly, pucker my lips into the ghost of a whistle, and trudge over the old Macomb's Dam bridge or the more ancient Kingsbridge planks, to seek shade and retirement in the woods that overlook Mosholu Creek, or line the historic banks of the Bronx.

Our Dutch ancestors patterned their houses largely after the fashion of their clothes, in a day when outward attire was as distinct an indication that they worshipped according to the rites of the Reformed Church of Holland as the Quaker's stiff garments bespoke the disciple of George Fox, and the severe and sombre dress of the New England Puritan marked the disciple of Cotton Mather. The home of Dirck Van Amsterdam looked like himself—short of stature, ample of girth, broad and deep of pocket, and unpretentious in his homely attire, and as he sat out on his stoop in the summer evening, drawing a cloud of comfort from his long pipe, his leathern breeches, huge brown waistcoat, and capacious shoes corresponded accurately with his comfortable home. With the English conquest there came an invasion of more ceremonious dress and statelier dwellings. Powdered wigs and cocked hats, velvet coats and breeches, silk stockings and massive canes marked the gentleman of the period, and he dwelt in a massive residence of brick or stone, such as within the memory of those still living were the city homes of the Waltons, De Pey-

sters, and other colonial families. In my youth the fashion of homes was one of quiet, unpretending dignity, without display—such homes as one still finds on the north side of Washington Square and facing it, which for elegance of comfort cannot be surpassed; or, at least, I think so. Recalling the civic dress of the period, I can see that the fashioning of house and attire was on the same plan of easy, dignified enjoyment. It was a decorous entity in red brick, with a mere shirt-frill of white marble stoop. As to the present day it is difficult to philosophize. As I am whirled up-town on an elevated road past the old houses on the Bloomingdale Road in which I "went to the country" for weeks at a time in my boyhood,

CLAREMONT

I behold a collection of symptoms that I find it impossible to diagnose.

There was certainly a dignity about the masculine dress of half a century or more ago which seems

to have been lost or forgotten. At that time a man's occupation could be told by "the cut of his jib," and professional characteristics were very noticeable. The clergyman wore a dress-coat of black, and folded a voluminous white handkerchief many times around his neck. In society one could not distinguish any ecclesiastical difference of dress between Dr. Berrian, the rector of Trinity Church, and Dr. Gardiner Spring, pastor of the Brick Church at Beekman Street and the Park, or between churchly Dr. Wainwright and his Calvinist antagonist who tilted at him with a sharp pen, Dr. Potts. The successful lawyer was wont to dress after the style of Daniel Webster, in blue coat with brass buttons, nankeen waistcoat and trousers, and ample shirt-frill. It was the portentous air of the physician that mainly distinguished him, for his clothes were plain, invariably black, and the older members of the fraternity clung to the gold-headed cane as if there were something of magic in it. The sober dress of the banker, the merchant, and the man of money was always the perfection of quiet taste, whether it were brown, blue, or black, and there was a quiet dignity about these men of business, whether in the counting-room or at home, that always challenged my admiration. One fashion all men had in common. None wore a mustache only. Shaven faces were the rule and a beard the exception; but the mustache was held to be the mark of the gambler or adventurer from abroad. I think it was in 1853 that Bishop Chase of New Hampshire came to New York to ordain the graduating class of the General Theological Seminary, and he positively refused to lay his consecrated hands upon one of its members, the Rev. John Frederick Schroeder, Jr., until

he had shaved his upper lip. The young man protested that a razor had never touched his face, and that he had thus intended to keep the unspoken vow of a Nazarene. His protest was in vain; the mustache had to go. So in later years, when the mustache was tolerated here, a young business man from this city who went to Milwaukee to be cashier in a bank was compelled to resort to the razor to satisfy prejudice. It was a day when no gentleman wore other than a "beaver" hat; when soft and round hats were alike unknown, and the cap was the next and final step in the descent; when fob ribbons and seals, and perhaps a solitary seal ring, were the rule for jewelry, when striped stockings were unknown, because the boot covered the socks that the hands of wife or mother had knitted.

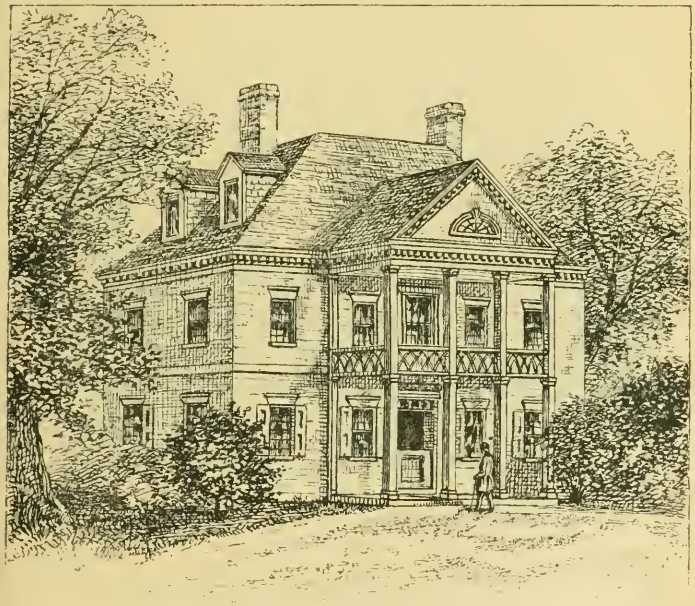
Thinking of this similitude between the man and his home, I find fresh cause of regret that the houses built in this city by the men of other days are so rapidly going to destruction. Only yesterday I passed the country home of Alexander Hamilton at One Hundred and Forty-third Street and Tenth Avenue, "The Grange." The estate was purchased some time ago and divided into villa lots, with the intention of making the homestead one of the "desirable residences for gentlemen of means," as advertised. But the demand for villas was not great, and the land was valuable, and already the home of Hamilton is enclosed on two sides by great ramparts of red-brick blocks. An abomination of desolation ranges around the house which but a year ago presented a scene of rural beauty, and a pile of new boards is laid up against the fence that surrounds the group of thirteen trees

planted by the hand of the great New Yorker who was the intimate friend as well as comrade in the field of George Washington, and the first Secretary of the Treasury. I think that if my father's hand had planted those trees, I would stand under the shadow of Washington's statue on Wall Street, and hold out my hat for pennies until the thirteen were redeemed and saved from the iconoclast, or the hat was worn out.* I remember what a fuss was made when the boyish Prince of Wales planted a tree in Central Park. A scrubby little Dutchman of an oak it is, and it exists but in a sickly manner, yet a thousand visitors ask for its whereabouts where one pilgrim to our local shrines inquires as to the fate of Alexander Hamilton's trees, and fair damsels have begged the powers that be for a leaf or an acorn from the prince's oak, and have offered gold in exchange for a twig from its branches. The spreading elm under which Washington sat upon his horse on "the Common" in front of our present City Hall, and listened to the reading of the Declaration of Independence to his troops at sunset of July 9, 1776, has disappeared, and the old pear-tree of Peter Stuyvesant, which stood

* "The Grange" has been removed a short distance, to the east side of Convent Avenue, where its preservation seems assured, since it is now the property of St. Luke's parish and in use as a rectory. By its side the handsome new Church of St. Luke's is going up (1892) on the corner of One Hundred and Forty-first Street. The Hamilton trees still remain, across the avenue, near One Hundred and Forty-third Street. They are strongly fenced in from casual injury. At a recent sale Mr. O. B. Potter bought the ground upon which the trees stand, avowedly to prevent their destruction. Some correspondence thereupon ensuing in the *Times* newspaper cast a doubt upon the belief that they were planted by Hamilton, but the weight of evidence seems to support the statement of the text.

at Third Avenue and Thirteenth Street, a patriarch whose years numbered ten score, has gone the way of all good fruit-trees, but the grove that Alexander Hamilton planted to commemorate these United States yet stands in its strength. What shall we do with it?

I like to make a patriotic pilgrimage on all of our public holidays, and I have a companion who is always ready to join me—my little son, who, fifty years hence, I hope, will take up these chronicles again, and



HOUSE OF NICHOLAS WILLIAM STUYVESANT

write the story of the city as he sees it to-day. Recently we laid out our tour to the defences that guarded Manhattanville in the two wars with Great

Britain, in which the spades of the old Continentals were supplemented by British sappers and miners, and the men of 1812 came in after-years to complete the line of protection for the growing city. We stood within the crumbling stone walls of Block-house No. 3, as it was known in the last war with Great Britain, on One Hundred and Twenty-third Street, between Ninth and Tenth avenues, and looked eastward to the busy city that covers the rough plain of a generation

BLOCK-HOUSE OVERLOOKING HARLEM RIVER, 1860

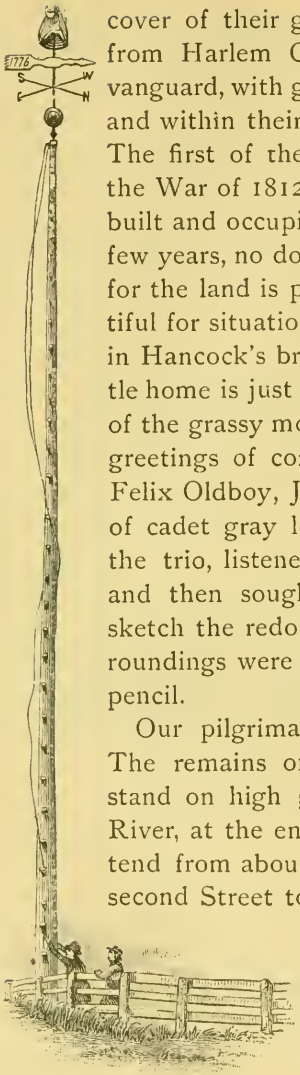
ago. At our feet a street had been cut through forty feet of solid rock, and broad avenues and boulevards stretched across the erstwhile village of Manhattanville and up the steep and wooded heights beyond. The walls of the block-house have crumbled at the sides, but the ruins are picturesque, and it ought to

be that the landscape-gardener who is to "improve" Morningside Park (within whose extreme upper boundary these ruins lie) will suffer them to remain untouched.*

But more interesting than these mossy walls are the earthworks that lie beyond, and that were part of the line of defences which in 1812 stretched diagonally across the island from Turtle Bay to Harlem Cove. In the hot sun we clambered up a steep ascent of rocks abutting on One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street, between Tenth Avenue and the Boulevard, and reached the remains of an earthwork, whose ramparts were breast-high twenty-five years ago, but are now not higher than the knee. A little to the west and south is a second redoubt, on another eminence, whose lines are more distinct.† These earthworks were originally thrown up by General Washington's troops during the war of the Revolution, and under

* It was not so much crumbling as depredation that reduced these walls. The neighbors found them an easy quarry of ready-cut stone. This has been stopped since the Park lines have been thrown around the old block-house, which is now under careful guardianship of the Park Commissioners.—L.

† These lines are most distinct on the north face ; the best point of view is from the east side of the Boulevard at One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Street and beyond. The visitor to the site of this fortification, ascending the bank at the north-east corner of One Hundred and Twenty-second Street and the Boulevard, will observe many signs of outlying works ; a shallow trench is all that remains of the old covered way into the redoubt. Between this and the redoubt intervenes the chasm caused by the costly and unnecessary extension of One Hundred and Twenty-third Street through the high, rocky ledge. Just south of Fort Laight the still more costly extension of One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Street cuts the ridge. Happily these street-openings (artificial cañons) destroy neither of the main earthworks.—L.

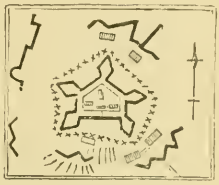


FLAG-STAFF, FORT WASHINGTON

cover of their guns the troops swept down from Harlem Cove and drove the English vanguard, with great loss, from Harlem Plains and within their upper lines of fortification. The first of these works was known during the War of 1812 as Fort Laight, and was rebuilt and occupied by our city militia. In a few years, no doubt, they will be swept away, for the land is private property and is beautiful for situation. A soldier who had fought in Hancock's brigade, and whose modest little home is just in the rear, told me the story of the grassy mounds, and we exchanged the greetings of comrades-in-arms, while Master Felix Oldboy, Jr., who in his school uniform of cadet gray looked the most soldierly of the trio, listened with widely-opened eyes, and then sought the shade of a rock to sketch the redoubt. The place and its surroundings were well worth the work of the pencil.

Our pilgrimage ended at Fort George. The remains of this extensive fortification stand on high ground west of the Harlem River, at the end of Tenth Avenue, and extend from about One Hundred and Ninety-second Street to One Hundred and Ninety-sixth Street. The soldiers of Washington first discovered the strategic importance of the place and occupied it with breastworks, but the British commander

erected an extensive and strong fortification here and named it Fort George, in honor of the heir of England's crown. Its green ramparts are still sharply defined, and afford a broad walk on their tops, and the outlying redoubts can be traced very distinctly. The spot was full of holiday pilgrims when we reached it, but whether they knew the story or only went there for recreation I could not tell. It is very safe to say that no other such view, and none equal to it in beauty, can be found on the Island of Manhattan. To the extreme west the Palisades lifted their wooded heads, and between the green heights of Inwood and Fort Washington the Hudson lay glittering in the afternoon sun. In front lay the long stretch of low ground through which the Kingsbridge Road winds its rustic way. Spuyten Duyvil Creek and Harlem River, with the uplands beyond, formed the north and east of the landscape, and the eye could catch a glimpse of the High Bridge. I stood on the ramparts that Washington had built and Howe had finished, and worshipped with my eye these beauties of the city of my love. As the little lad who had been sketching at the foot of the glacis ran forward, I wondered what the landscape would look like when he comes to write another "Tour" fifty years hence. He will show his sketches to his grandchildren, and speak of his pilgrimage to Fort George on a sunshiny afternoon in a September of long ago. And I? Well, I shall then be telling my grandmother all about it, too.



PLAN OF FORT WASHINGTON

CHAPTER XXVII

AN UNEXPLORED REGION — TRACES OF COWBOYS AND HESSIANS — LORDS OF THE MANOR—THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY—OLD HOMES AND HAUNTS

ONE Sunday I was whirled in the railway cars along the banks of Spuyten Duyvil Creek to the vicinity of the spot where Anthony the Trumpeter had come to grief. It was an extra day in the "Tour," for, with the advent of a red tinge to the maple leaves, and the purpling of the oak tops, and with the opening of the reign of golden-rod and gentian and aster, there had come an irresistible desire to explore the *terra incognita* of New York, the land lying north of Kingsbridge, known little to the denizens of this big city, excepting real estate speculators and antiquaries. It is a land of stately old homes and luxurious modern residences; of the forest primeval and the landscape-gardener's effects; of modern avenues and ancient creeks and swamps; of æsthetic interiors and of old-fashioned window-seats, in which Continental soldier and Hessian hireling alternately lounged; of lake and creek, and highland and meadow; of mounted policemen and letter-boxes and steam fire-engines; of fields and hills that have not changed their contour since Peter Stuyvesant's solid men-at-arms marched over them, and King George allotted their fertile acres to his liege subjects. It is a land, too, that lies within the

city limits, and I, Felix Oldboy, wearied of beholding only that which modern hands had improved out of all recollection, yearned for a leisure Sunday under oaks and chestnuts in city woods, which should recall the days of fishing in "Sunfish Pond" on Beekman Hill, and of gathering autumn leaves on the Bloomingdale Road, that used to stretch from Union Square to Kingsbridge in an unbroken panorama of rural loveliness.

There is nothing more beautiful in the way of landscape than that which greets the eye where Spuyten

CONFLUENCE OF SPUYTEN DUYVIL CREEK AND THE HUDSON

Duyvil Creek joins its waters to the Hudson — the lake-like rivers overlooked by wooded heights on either side, while beyond the Palisades rise abruptly in their grandeur, and distant hills to the east complete a picture worthy of the pencil of Claude. At Kingsbridge, too, there is much pastoral loveliness. The silver thread of Tibbett's Brook (Mosholu, in the Indian tongue) wanders up through the vale of Yonkers, with frowning ridges on one side, and on the other meadows and orchards, over which hills crowned with the green of ancient forest trees stand sentinel. One can walk in almost any direction and soon be able to fancy himself living in the times of long ago, or anywhere else save within the municipal boundaries of the chief city of the New World. It is fortunate for future generations that much of this landscape loveliness is to be preserved in the new Van Cortlandt Park, which will be about two miles in length and one mile broad. The land affords every variety of landscape, and its natural features render it a far more desirable acquisition than Central Park. Originally part of the great Phillipse fief, it passed into the hands of the Van Cortlandts in 1699, when the head of that house married Eva Phillipse, daughter of the patroon. Time has brought few changes to these lands since the days of the Revolution.

It is to be hoped that the city authorities will preserve from destruction the old Van Cortlandt mansion-house. It is a large edifice of stone, unpretentious in its way, and yet possessing a stateliness of its own that grows upon the visitor. Erected in 1748—the date is on its front—it preserves within and without many of the peculiarities of the last century. One

of the rooms in especial is unchanged since the time when the Hessian commandant of the Green Yagers occupied it, and General Washington made it his headquarters just before his triumphal entry into New York on Evacuation Day, 1783. Around the fireplace are old-fashioned blue tiles, that tell Scriptural stories in the quaint method of illustration then prevailing, where saint and sinner were alike, as my grandmother would say, "a sight to behold." The deep window-seats are admirably suggestive of a quiet smoke for the elders and cosey flirtations for the younger people. Andirons, which have a history of their own, speak comfortable words of the day of back-logs and plenteous brushwood. As for the furniture, it is again in fashion and most valuable, for it is genuine in its antiquity. Jarvis, Copley, Stewart, and Chapman have furnished the family portraits, one of which is that of a knighted vice-admiral of the British Navy.

But thereby hangs a tale. Outside, above the old-fashioned windows, are some exceedingly grim visages carved in stone in the shape of corbels, whose serious, not to say morose, aspect would be calculated to drive away any sensitive tramp in affright. Pointing up to them, my quondam school-mate, Bowie Dash, who occupies an ideal cottage embowered by the trees that fringe the ridge through which Riverdale Avenue sweeps, remarked, "Those are the portraits of the Van Cortlandt ancestors — family portraits, all of them." "Yes," said Mr. Van Cortlandt, with all seriousness, "and that particularly solemn one yonder was carved after he had been out all night with the boys."

The windows themselves present an interesting sci-

entific problem. Upon two sides of the house the glass has all the appearance of ground glass, though it was perfectly transparent when first placed there. Closer examination reveals a process of disintegration, spiculæ of glass falling off when scraped by the finger-nails. Amateur scientists have been unable to account for it. Exposure to the salt-water of Mosholu Creek would be a plausible theory if all the glass fared alike. But some years ago the rows of stately box, venerable for their height and antiquity, which stood in the old garden and faced the windows that exhibit this phenomenon, were cut down, and the glass that has been inserted since that time shows no sign of change or decay. Whether the combination of box scents and salt air will account for the problem is a matter which only experimental science can determine, and Mr. Van Cortlandt would be very glad to have the puzzle solved.

There is scarcely a foot of ground about Kingsbridge that is not historical. Here the British had their outposts in the Revolution. Both sides erected earthworks on the adjacent hills. Skirmishes were frequent in these meadows, and many lives were sacrificed. Relics of the war—cannon-balls, bayonets, skeletons in full uniform—have been turned up by spade and plough, and many more are awaiting their resurrection at the hands of public improvements. The old tavern at Kingsbridge saw lively times in peace as well as war. The Albany post-road passed its door, and teams and passengers baited here. Dainty dames in lofty headgear and ample hoops have danced with the sons of the patroons on its floors, and smugglers have made it their headquarters for lawless

forays. Going, going, gone. The public surveyor and the modern apartment-house are in hot pursuit of these romantic old localities. One has only to turn into Riverdale Avenue to be aware that the luxurious civilization of the period is learning to appreciate the beauties of this neighborhood, which, when I was a boy, was associated with the names of Lispenard Stewart, Abraham Schermerhorn, Ackerman, Delafield, Wetmore, and Whiting.

THE LANE IN VAN CORTLANDT PARK.

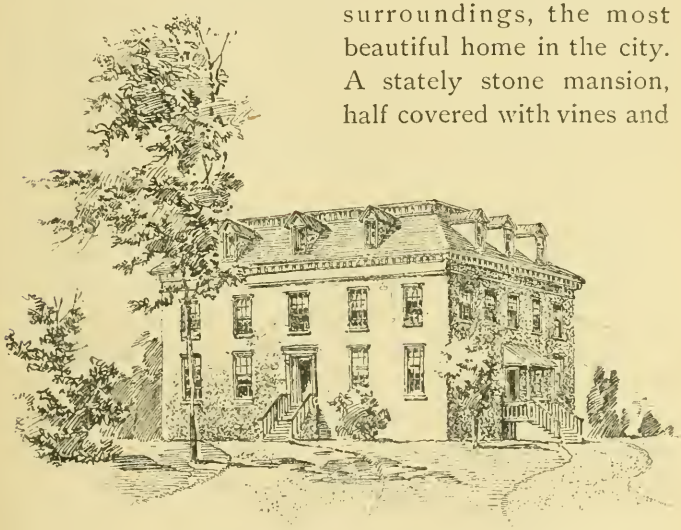
It will be a pity to blot out the natural beauties of the spot for the sake of a little more brick and mortar — at least, I thought so last Sunday as I climbed up Riverdale Avenue and fancied myself temporarily in Elysium. Riding is too rapid a gait to allow of realizing the beauty of forest, ravine, meadow, hillside, brook, and homes enshrined in landscape loveliness which is presented to the pedestrian on either side of the road. Tired? Not a bit of it, even if I am growing stout, and this is considerable

of a hill to climb. I am looking at that maple. Did you ever see such a splendor of crimson and gold as lights up its top and sides? That fringed gentian—are not its purple spikes a delectable contrast to the sunny clusters of its taller neighbor, the golden-rod? The oak leaves are turning ruddy, too, as if they had been imbibing freely of the autumn's product. These old fellows have a right to be jolly, too, for they were children at the time when Hendrik Hudson anchored in Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and shot a falcon at two hundred Indians who had gathered on shore to dispute the right of way, and dispersed them with the noise and execution of this terrible weapon.

There is one oak still standing in a little wood that has known no change for a century, which has a history of its own. It is a sturdy tree with ample brown arms, clad to-day in a royal robe of purple, and defiant seemingly of all changes except such as the iconoclastic axe of the woodman may bring. You can see it from the road. Under its branches, so my informant tells me, a horse that bore a good soldier of the Union all through the late war, and whose gray coat is still presentable, is grazing peacefully. But in other days these great gnarled limbs bore other fruit. Tradition affirms that during the war of the Revolution more than thirty cowboys were hanged from this oak, and the annals of those days bear out the popular legend. This was part of the "neutral ground" of '76—a territory extending from Harlem River to the Croton, which was ravaged with engaging impartiality by the camp-followers of both armies. The British called themselves irregulars, but the name "cowboys" could not be wiped out, and their punish-

ment was never irregular when they were caught. The gentlemen who did the same favor to the Continental flag were called "skinners," and their shrift was an equally short one when caught. Usually the latter had the best of the game, because the sympathies of all except the large landed proprietors were with the colonies.

Beyond the wild primeval wood that holds this historic oak stands what seems to me, for situation and surroundings, the most beautiful home in the city. A stately stone mansion, half covered with vines and



VAN CORTLANDT MANOR-HOUSE

[See also p. 317]

encircled by thirteen majestic elms, stands on a knoll which overlooks the Mosholu Valley and gives glimpses of twenty miles away. Nature did nearly all that was possible for its seventeen acres, and the landscape-gardener has finished it. At one side all is

wildly picturesque, with ravine and brook and masses of rock; on the other civilization has done its best, and equally admirably. On an apple-tree, still standing, Jacobus Van Cortlandt carved his name nearly two centuries ago, and the stout stone farm-house that another Van Cortlandt built in 1766 shelters the coachman's family. The place is now owned by Mr. Waldo Hutchins, who has been living there for the past twenty years.

Broad piazzas, a hall of ample width that shows no sign of a stairway, great rooms with high ceilings, thick walls, and large windows recall the old baronial homes of Virginia. But there the resemblance ceases, save in the matter of baronial hospitality, for modern luxury clothes the interior more royally than our ancestors dreamed of—and, it must be confessed, more comfortably. Of the family heirlooms within, two portraits taken from life interested me most. One is of Noah Webster—the maternal grandfather of Mrs. Hutchins—the patient, industrious builder of the dictionary, who wrought at his work for twenty years, until his fingers became stiff from using the pen, and he fainted away when he had written the word "Finis." No wonder. I held some of his manuscript in my hand, and it made me tired to look at its intricacies, it was so suggestive of hard work. The other portrait presents Oliver Ellsworth, the paternal grandfather of Mrs. Hutchins, in his robe of Chief-justice of the United States, only with the addition of a red velvet collar to set off the sombreness of the heavy folds of black silk. His is a typical New England face, intellectual, determined, and strong. A later generation has forgotten that after the "Virginia

plan" had been adopted by the Constitutional Convention of 1787, on the basis of a "national Government," or a single republic, in contradistinction to a Federal Union of separate States, on motion of Mr. Ellsworth the word "national" was stricken out and the words "Government of the United States" substituted in its place.

Riverdale Avenue forms a beautiful drive. Its roadway is as smooth as any drive in Central Park, and it has every advantage in the way of scenery. But this holds good only up to the city line, beyond which point the Yonkers authorities seem to look upon it as a country road, and treat it accordingly. The castellated mansion which Edwin Forrest built, and which he named Font Hill, marks the end of the city limits. It long ago passed into the hands of a religious sisterhood, who use it for school purposes. Poor Forrest! He had no taste for domestic life, and his happiest hours were passed upon the stage. Chance brought me frequently, when a boy, into the company of his wife and her sisters, Mrs. Voorhees and Miss Virginia Sinclair, and all my boyish sympathies were enlisted in their behalf and against the man who had slandered the woman who bore his name. I never pass the neighborhood of the old city residence of Forrest, on Twenty-second Street, near Eighth Avenue, but I think of this unhappy episode. Font Hill is the monument of his blasted hopes.

One would think it would be a pleasure to live in sight of the Palisades of the Hudson, but a gentleman who occupied a house on the banks of the Hudson for several years assures me that his experience was disenchanting. The sight of that tall barrier of rock and

woods beyond the silver waves of the Hudson grew terribly monotonous. He wanted to throw it down and get a glimpse of the lovelier landscape that he knew lay beyond it. A sense of imprisonment crept over him, and he was glad at last to move away. His paradise of the Palisades had its apple-tree and serpent. Viewed in this light, there was an element of reality in the joke of that wild wag, Fred Cozzens, who astonished the people of Kingsbridge and Yonkers by deliberately proposing to whitewash the Palisades. He argued that the effect would be wholesome to the eye and refreshing to the public taste, while it would break the monotony of the landscape, and give them something bright and clean to look at instead of venerable and dusty rocks. Such was his apparent sincerity and earnestness that he found many sympathizers, and for a while the contest over the proposition raged hotly.

As I steal back to the lower city, and the thousands of lights that dot Harlem Plains break into sight, like the sudden rush and twinkle of a myriad of huge fireflies, I got to wondering at a letter which came to me a few days before. Was it a joke? The writer more than hints that Felix Oldboy knows nothing of "the élite of the city in former years." Perhaps not. But how the men and women of those days would have smiled at the word "élite." Most of them never heard it, probably, and none of them would have suffered their names to be printed in an "Élite Directory." Fancy one of the sons of the Knickerbockers being asked if he belonged to the "élite!" One reason, I think, why Felix Oldboy loves the New York of former times, and seldom passes one of its historic

points without some such quickening of the pulse as he feels when some one speaks of fields in the late war upon which he drew a sword, is that he has an ancestral interest in them. When Congress called for troops in 1775, Colonel Oldboy, my ancestor, led a battalion into the field, and his oldest son, also an ancestor of mine, commanded a company in it. On his manorial estate, which his father had held before him, his wife held high state, and those who wished to stand well in her eyes always addressed her as Lady Oldboy. It is said to have been an awesome sight when Lady Washington and Lady Oldboy met and exchanged stately courtesies. Lafayette, who was an ardent personal friend of Colonel Oldboy, and presented him at one time with an elegant suit that had just arrived from Paris, whose most striking ingredient was a bright green silk waistcoat that is still preserved in the family, was a conspicuous figure at Lady Oldboy's manorial receptions. Were these stately old souls the "élite?" If they were, they did not know it, and I, for one, would not have liked to call them, to their face, by such a name.

As for the rest, these papers were not intended as a topical or social history. They are simply the record of a random tour through places whose acquaintance I made as a boy, that recall the people of other days whom I have known.

"Felix," said my grandmother, "always cut your cloth by your pattern."

MY SUMMER ACRE

CHAPTER I

FELIX OLDBOY'S HOT WEATHER HOME—ON THE EAST RIVER, FACING HELL GATE—A STATELY MANSION OF SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO—SOLITUDE IN THE CITY

I DISCOVERED it. A new De Soto, in pantaloons, coat of broadcloth and silk hat—most degenerate successors of the velvets and lace and plumes of three centuries ago. I was making a pedestrian voyage through the old haunts of my boyhood when I sighted a lonely acre of ground in which stood an ancient house and some still more venerable trees. To the eye of the casual voyager it was a wreck amid the spick and span newness of the busy town that had grown up around it and overshadowed its age with noise and bustle, but I knew better. To me it was an oasis amid a desert of strange faces and crowding streets. Not Robinson Crusoe was more delighted with the treasures of his island home in the Pacific than I with this acre of sunshine and grasses and green leaves, lapped by the tides of a swift river on one side and by the waves of sound from a great city all about it. The hand of improvement had claimed

the house for its own, and the progress of prosperity had decreed its destruction. But I pleaded for yet another year of its life, and my prayer was heard. Some of my friends smiled at the madness of the project, and others prophesied that I would soon weary of my exile, and others yet again drew enticing pictures of the pleasures to be found at the sea-side and in the mountains; but these things were as little to the purpose as warnings that the heat of the dog-days would beat pitilessly upon the house, and the dust of droughts encompass it. I persisted in my plan and in the early spring moved with a strange delight, that somehow felt like the quickening pulse of boyhood, into what my daughter Nellie was pleased to call the ark.

My summer acre fronts upon the East River, near the spot where the waters of Hell Gate begin to seethe and swirl. Standing on the little bluff in which its garden ends, and towards which its velvety lawn descends from the back porch, one can see the rarest and loveliest of pictures. Across and up the river where Pot Rock once made the waters boil and the Frying Pan was a terror to navigators; where Flood Rock is alternately submerged and exposed by the tides; where the Hog's Back and Nigger's Head yet wreck an occasional vessel; where the shaded river road of Astoria allows rare glimpses of stately mansions between the trees, and the green ramparts of Ward's Island are wondrous pleasant to the eye and hide other lovely islands beyond that are fruitful of legends as of lobsters—are stretches of scenery than which there is nothing more beautiful on the Atlantic coast line. Back of me and on either hand may be

heard the coarse melody of the hand-organ, the strident shriek of steam, the shouts of children at play in the streets, the ceaseless undertone of wagon and incessant hum of labor, and the puff of steamboat and clatter of tug may be heard upon the waters; but the sunshine turns the silver of the breakers upon the rocks to gold, the shadows of overhanging trees mirror themselves in the quiet waters of tiny bays, the little hills are clothed with beauty as with a garment, and I have enough of imagination left to fancy myself in Arcadia.

The house is as old as our second war with Great Britain. It was built for the summer residence of a family whose city mansion was then in the neighborhood of the Bowling Green. Built in a most substantial manner of wood, it is two stories in height, surmounted by a "gallery"—a flattened top to its slightly sloping roof that is fenced in by a light and graceful railing. Here, at the close of the summer day, the family would gather to enjoy the sunset hour, and here, not infrequently, tea was handed around, to be followed by supper at a later hour. Seen from the street, the building is long and low, painted white, with a wide porch upheld by plain white columns, smooth and round, extending along the entire front as well as the rear. The windows have small panes, and the shutters are of solid wood with round holes cut through the tops. The north side is shaded by an immense elm that must have been mature when the house was born, and at the south side are a cluster of ancient cherry-trees, whose scant blossoms in April were like the white locks on the head of fourscore years. Honeysuckle vines almost cover the porch; lilac bushes rise up to hide the view of garden and

lawn, and a gigantic pine, that tradition declares to be older than the Union, stands sentinel at the front gate. It is small wonder that I loved the place when I saw it.

Within the house there was an air of by-gone stateliness in the wide central hall and large, empty rooms on either side, which my daughter Nellie (her name by baptism is Eleanor) has toned down into an atmosphere of enticing comfort by the deft witchery of a woman's touch. The solid mahogany doors and oaken wainscoting are still there, but portières and rugs, sleepy hollows of chairs and lounges that irresistibly invite to forty winks of sleep, have lessened their imposing effect, and I have only partly revived the antique by insisting upon dining at my grandmother's massive mahogany table, having my ancient mahogany chairs with tall backs placed on guard in hall and parlor, and having time dealt out to us by a clock above whose face the moon rolls out its changes and whose case reaches quite up to the ceiling. Thus the old keeps its ground, even if the new challenges it at every turn.

"Snug," said my friend, the old colonel, as he stood in the hall and looked about him, taking in, with a twitch of satisfaction at his mouth, the wood fire that blazed on the parlor hearth in the chill May morning. "Upon my word, Felix, it is not half as bad as it might be. For a dreamer like you, it's snug." That was praise indeed. For be it known that the colonel, who prides himself upon being a man of action, labors under the conceit that, because I love the past and am apt to be happy in the company of ghosts, and, indeed, at times to seek their fellowship, I am a dreamer.

NEW YORK FROM BROOKLYN HEIGHTS, 1822

He is young, intensely young. His family Bible declares that he has passed the earthly limit of fourscore years, and this one fact has almost led me to doubt the testimony of that book and to declare myself an agnostic. Though I am much his junior, he persists in declaring that I am the elder of the two, and to look at him one might believe him my contemporary in years. When he enters and calls for me to come out and take a constitutional, I drop pen or book and surrender at discretion. If on these occasions I can get off with a march of five miles, I count myself fortunate. I verily believe he will be able to do his ten miles a day when he rounds the century point.

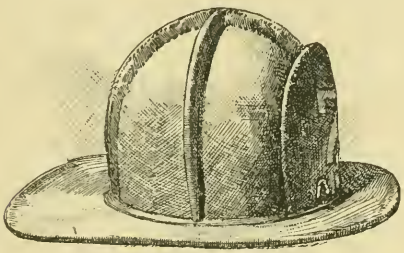
If the old colonel has an aggressive quality it is his intensity. He does nothing by halves. Upright in every thought and act, he would never be content to go to a half-way heaven, or send his enemies to a half-way hell. Yet he has the heart of a little child. To hear him after a ferocious fashion pitch into radicalism —for he imagines himself the most consistent of conservatives—with an emphasis that might lead the black cook in the kitchen to imagine that the house is on fire, while all the time he is caressing a purring kitten on his ample knee and its mother sits blinking confidingly at him, is to inspire the spectator with a doubt whether he, the spectator, has as yet really acquired a knowledge of human nature. On these occasions I am as speechless as the cats. Like them, I blink; superior to them, I smoke, and hide myself behind a cloud. But Nellie has only to raise a finger, and the voice of the old warrior, who is her devoted slave, sinks almost to a whisper. Mistress Nell knows

her power, and does not hesitate to exercise it. In fact, as between her little ladyship in the parlor and massive Diana in the kitchen, I am always ready to own the inferiority of my sex—inside the house, of course. But to see the old colonel meet and exchange compliments with his enslaver, after the stately methods of sixty years ago, is a lesson in manners which I cannot help wishing were taught in our clubs of today.

Our cats are three in number. Nebuchadnezzar, an immense feline symphony in yellow and white, is my special property, and usually answers to the name of "Neb." Martha Washington, whose attire is an unbroken black, is more generally known as "Pat." I have my doubts whether the Father of his Country ever called Mrs. Washington "Pat," or would have dared to do so, but he speaks frequently in his letters and diary of his favorite niece, his "dearest Patsey." Satan, the small black son of Martha Washington, completes the group. Very important are these three to my life in my summer acre. I cannot make the round of my domains in comfort unless Nebuchadnezzar is trotting at my heels, and Mrs. W. is the faithful attendant and beloved confidant of Master Felix Oldboy, Jr., aged fourteen. As for Satan, he shall speak for himself.

Nellie laughs at my idea of contentment in an acre. Even so did I laugh in my youth. Bless her heart, and keep it childlike! I know that by-and-by will come a time when she will understand how it is that an acre is a world to a child of threescore, and will realize that my sunshine is as full of warmth and splendor as if I were possessor of an estate as big as a

township. I sit watching the moon rise over the bubbling waters of Hell Gate, and hold in my hand the slender palm of my little boy—the Benjamin of my riper years—whose love I would not exchange for the crown of the czars. The boy turns and smiles as if he had read my thoughts, and Nebuchadnezzar solemnly rises, rubs himself against us, and purs a whole hymn of happiness.



AN OLD-TIME FIRE-CAP

CHAPTER II

THE DARK PHANTOM WHICH DOGGED A POSTMAN'S FEET—A GARDEN CALENDAR—NOTES OF THE FARM ACRE

THE steps of the letter-carrier, who had just brought the mail, rattled away briskly around the corner. The blithe little man in gray, who, with a bundle of letters and newspapers in hand, has walked the distance of five times around the globe in the last twenty-three years, had set me to thinking. If letter-carriers ever die—and I have a sort of hazy belief that they gradually cremate themselves, and so vanish into thin air as they walk—this cheery man of letters, whom the street knows and smiles upon as Bob, will be found on the threshold of that particular one of the many mansions which is devoted to the post-office department, with a package in his hand and a smile on his face. Yet he has a dark phantom of care that sometimes falls into step behind him and dogs his feet. He believes that had his childhood been happier he might have made a success in life, and success in his vocabulary—for Bob is not wiser than his generation—means wealth and position. It is too bad, though I did not tell him so. There is no man so poor and powerless but that he can give his son or daughter a happy childhood. Then, however bitter the battle may be afterwards, there will be years of sunshine to

look back upon, and no cloud can dim them, no burglar steal their remembrance.

But Bob told the story a great deal more to the point than I am doing. Let him speak. And bear in mind that he told it with no attempt at sympathy and no thought of sentiment. It was my boy's new jacket, of which he had caught a glimpse, and which he evidently admired on æsthetic principles, because it was a change, which started the stream of reminiscence.

"A jacket was the turning-point in my life," so the man of mails began. "When I was a boy of fourteen years I wanted a velvet jacket, such as were then the fashion with people who were richer than ourselves. The price was seven dollars; and as I knew there was no use in asking for it, I determined to earn the money and save it up. It was a tight pull, I can tell you, but at last I pulled through all right. Wasn't I proud when I counted up the seven dollars! and I was happy, too, in anticipation of wearing the jacket the next Sunday. I went to my father, put the money in his hand, and told him what I wanted. Of course, I would not think of getting it myself; boys did not do business in that way when I was young. At night my father came home with a bundle, and I ran to see it opened. He pulled out a dark satinet jacket that I was sure did not cost half the money, threw it down before me, and, with the remark that it was plenty good enough for me to wear, turned to go out of the room. My heart and my courage were broken, but I managed to speak. 'Father,' I said, 'I will never save another penny as long as I live.' I have kept my promise. It was the turning-point of

my life, and I think it took all ambition out of me. So you see me a letter-carrier at fifty—a mere machine to plod the streets. It all came of that jacket. I remember it as if it were yesterday." "Did your father give you back the rest of the money?" I asked. "Never!" That is all. It was not much of a tragedy, yet it marred a life.

The garden is a daily delight to me. The only drawback is the fear that some neighbor may chance to criticise it in a friendly way as small. Yet, in the spirit of the contented African who anticipated criticism by saying in praise of the turkey he had won at a raffle, "De breed am small, but de flavor am delicious," I am prepared to take up a similar line of eulogy on my garden. Take it as you please, on either the ornamental or the useful side. There never were such battlements of box as hedge in the gravel-walks; no such velvet covers a drawing-room floor as that bit of lawn that stretches down to the little bluff above the river; those roses that weight the bushes are peerless, and the fragrance of the syringa buds is the very refinement of orange blossoms, and redolent with every breath of the youth and beauty that plucked their ancestral twigs in evenings of long ago. The lilacs have had their day, but wait until the lady's-slippers and marigolds and hollyhocks take up their march in battalions, and the sweet-peas, four-o'clocks, and morning-glories show their colors! On the wistarias thick green leaves have succeeded the purple clusters of flowers that greeted May, but the leaves of the honeysuckle-vine are not so many as its tendril-like blossoms of buff and pink and white, and the odor is at times a revelation in the way of teaching

humanity the right use of the nose. For, at times, as I sit under the shadow of the honeysuckle, the cadences of odor strike a succession of keys in what is literally my organ of smell, and recall so many forgotten episodes that had the fragrance of a spray of honeysuckle or the scent of a June rose for their connecting link, that I feel like having the rector return special thanks in the church next Sunday for the gift of noses to men.

On the March day in which I first walked the bounds of my territory, I noticed, not far from the river-side, in a depression of the ground that seemed to have once been the bed of a brook, a bunch of pussy willows, which had already put forth its buds. Some of these buds were silver gray and others were brown in color, but all were soft and fleecy as the skins of little mice. A willow-tree that stood near by had but cut its leaves on April 20th; a week later the maples had caught up with them, and the next week saw the poplars and elms slowly spreading out their verdure. Meantime the lilac bushes had forged ahead, and at the finish were most luxuriant of all in the full, free spread of their dark green foliage. The cherry-trees, I noticed, were first of the fruits to put out their blossoms, and were in full bloom on April 28th. It was ten days later that the pink loveliness of the peach-tree dawned, with spikes of green leaves yet unfolded showing between the flowers, and it was not until the middle of May that an apple-tree, which shades the kitchen, and which the builder of the house planted at his wife's request to shade the maid when she churned, was in the full bloom of its beauty—an animated milky way. Early in Easter week

the dandelion had spread its modest oriflamme to the air, and on Easter Sunday, April 21st, a bush of golden-bells gave notice that the season of flowers had fairly dawned. Already, too, the red and saffron shoots of peonies had thrust their heads well above-ground, and thick bunches of hollyhock leaves had raised their protest against further slumber in the life of plants. On the day that May came in, the pink profusion of the flowering almond had entered on its brief career; then came the lilacs, heavy with sweet scent; the blossoms of the hawthorn hedge, laden with honey; the clover, red and white, and, before the month had closed, roses, honeysuckle, bluebells, syringa, and pink balls of peony bloom had blended a marvellous kaleidoscope of colors in the garden.

Not being entirely confident of results, I have laid out my vegetable garden in the north-east corner of my acre, where it does not obtrude upon criticism. My farm in the rear of the house is divided in twain by a broad, box-bordered gravel-walk. The southern half is lawn. Next to the walk, in the northern half, is the flower-garden—a plot of some sixty feet by thirty—and, beyond, a plot of similar size is devoted to vegetables. It is a miracle of thrifty promise now. The peas have clambered up into the brush and put forth their milk-white blossoms; the heart-shaped leaves on the bean-stalks have broadened out to full size; the tomato plants, looking like young elms, have learned to stand alone; three rows of silky, shining spears are rising to conceal the fence and sentinel the patch, and at their feet are the beginnings of squash vines.

The modern statesman declares that the Indian

DUTCH HOUSES

cannot be made a farmer, but I have an idea that the statesman is a mere Dogberry in agriculture. When Hendrik Hudson visited the village of Sapohanikan—a settlement of forty men and seventeen women who cultivated a portion of what is now the Ninth Ward—he found a circular barn built of oak bark and having an arched roof, which "contained a great quantity of maize or Indian corn, and beans of last year's growth; and there lay near the house, for the purpose of drying, enough to load three ships, besides what was growing in the fields." And that veracious historian, Van der Donck, speaks of "a vegetable peculiar to the natives, called by our people quaasiens (squashes), a name derived from the aborigines, as the plant was not known to us before our intercourse with them. It is a delightful fruit, as well to the eye for its colors as to the mouth for its agreeable taste."

Well might the poet, Evert Nieuwenhof, write of Manhattan:

> "Why mourn about Brazil, full of base Portuguese,
> When Van der Donck shows so much better fare?"

That was a mosquito which interrupted me and shortened the quotation, but I have killed him. He came across the river from Long Island. Van der Donck makes no mention of mosquitoes as native to the Island of Manhattan, and I know that ours are imported. I may be proud enough of my country to cease to plead the baby act and to take my chances as a free-trader, but I believe in protection against the ferocious domestic dragons of Long Island—the carnivorous winged monster which goes by the harmless name of mosquito. The infant gnats of New York can never compete with them.

I said that I had killed him, but I was mistaken. He is back again, and as numerous as Falstaff's men in buckram. The pen is feebler than his spear, and I lay it down.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW WORLD VENICE—PANORAMA OF EAST RIVER ISLANDS—A LOVELY WATER JOURNEY—AN OLD-TIME SHERIFF IN HIS HOME

It has always seemed a pity to be compelled to bid good-bye to the Maelstrom, Nero's Fiddle, the Mountains of the Moon, the pot of gold that lies buried at the foot of the rainbow, and other delusions of my youth, and to have to exchange the poetry of fancy for the prose of fact. It has been a disappointment to me not to find Hell Gate the terror that the early Dutch navigator described it, and yet I must confess that this loss is in great measure made up by its ineffaceable beauty. The Rev. Master Woolley, who published a journal of his visit to America in 1678, speaks of Hell Gate as being "as dangerous as the Norway maelstrom," and says: "In this Hell Gate, which is a narrow passage, runneth a rapid, violent stream, both upon flood and ebb; and in the middle lieth some islands of rocks, upon which the current sets so violently that it threatens present shipwrack; and upon the flood is a large whirlpool, which sends forth a continual, hideous roaring." Into this wild whirl of waters no early navigator ventured to embark except of necessity, and the superstition of sailors expressed itself in giving the names of "Devil's Frying Pan" and "Devil's Gridiron" to two of its reefs. To-night, as we sit upon the back porch, smok-

ing our pipes in enjoyment that needs few words for its expression, I am entirely disposed to go out of the past into the present. Seldom has a more lovely picture been spread before the eye. The waters are silvered everywhere by moonlight, and the ripples on rock and reef are burnished to unearthly brightness. The city lies hidden by the vines that overshadow us. Across the swift stream the horizon is bounded by clustering trees that more than half conceal the homes on the Long Island shore, and on the islands below and above us the moon tips turreted buildings that have almost buried themselves in foliage, and that lend the landscape an old-time appearance. Across the bosom of the rapid river flash craft of every build, from the great steamship on her trip to Maine to the dancing row-boat on pleasure or lobstering intent. We smoke in silence, we two who have had our day and yet are younger in heart than many who are our juniors by a score or two of years; indeed, the youthfulness of my comrade sometimes appalls me, as to-night when he proposed that we should hire a launch and explore the East River.

It would be no bad thing if every New Yorker who has the time to spare could make a voyage of discovery between Governor's Island and Throgg's Neck. To travel swiftly through on a steamboat would not answer the purpose. A sail-boat that would skirt the islands and penetrate the bays, or a naphtha launch which would make its way in spite of currents, is what the Columbus of the East River needs. That part of New York which flies to Bar Harbor or Newport for scenery or the sea does not know that the sea and its estuaries, its rocks, and its tides, are at

their doors. The Palisades and Highlands of the Hudson have had their eulogists for half a century, and the Tappan Zee and Catskill Mountains have been immortalized in romance, but poetry has yet to discover the rare beauties of the East River, whose water-front is not surpassed in attractiveness in any country. Gemmed with islands, garlanded with woods, beset by rocks which are rich in legendary lore, and headlands that are redolent of history; in many spots as unchanged as in the days when Harlem was a tiny, sleepy settlement, remote from the busy City of New Amsterdam; this arm of the sea is one of the loveliest, if least regarded, features of the grandest of American cities.

When New York was created to be a great maritime city, care was taken to supply it with all that it should need in the way of islands, and they were strewn about its main island foundation with proper picturesqueness. Those who remember the islands in their primeval loveliness, when they were the homes of some of our ancient families, and were clad in verdure in summer, and in impressive dreariness in winter, may regret that the city has been compelled to use some of them as homes for the sick and the sinner, but even the stern majesty of the law cannot make them other than beautiful. It is a matter of congratulation with those who believe that the useful need not be ugly that there are some things which the hands of men who fancy that they can always improve upon nature cannot mar. The islands in the East River will always remain an enchanting feature in the topography of this maritime metropolis, and New Yorkers, who are somewhat prone to overlook

advantages which lie directly at their doors, will some day open their eyes to appreciate them just as the old colonel and I feast our eyes upon stray bits of their loveliness to-night.

The little island at the mouth of the East River, which is owned by the United States, but will revert to the city if its bristling cannon and other paraphernalia of war are abandoned and its flag is drawn down, was historically and municipally connected with other islands in the river from the early days of the Dutch Governors of New Netherlands. Its Indian name was Pagganck, or Nut Island, lengthened by the Dutch into Noton, or Nutten Island, and from the first settlement was made a perquisite of the director-general for the time being. Hither the small boy, who could then wade across from Red Hook or paddle himself from New Amsterdam, went to gather the plentiful crop of chestnuts until such time as an English Governor erected a summer-house on one of its knolls. The renowned Wouter Van Twiller, the Doubter, whose only certainty in life was that public office was a private trust, and who was the official ancestor of a long line of land-grabbers, was the original purchaser of Pagganck from Cacapetegno and Pewihas, the aboriginal owners, and while he bought this realm of the bluebird and bobolink in his capacity of director-general of the New Netherlands, he proceeded to use it as private property, as he did also Great Barn and Little Barn Islands—the latter now known as Ward's and Randall's islands, and stocked and cultivated them for the benefit of his own purse. Their "high mightinesses, the lords of the honorable West India Company," did not relish these proceedings, and sub-

sequently ordered Governor Stuyvesant to take steps to secure "Nut Island and Hell Gate" as public property, and this was done. One of the English successors of Walter, the Doubter, was a man after his own heart. For, when the Colonial Assembly placed £1000 at the disposal of Lord Cornbury to fortify the island, that luxurious gentleman proceeded to expend the money in erecting for himself a handsome country residence there, and it was not until the war of the Revolution broke out that fortifications were erected there alternately by the patriot and British forces. After peace was declared, and Governor Clinton, as executive of the sovereign and independent State of New York, came into possession of the island, he leased it for the purposes of a race-course and hotel, and all New York went pleasuring there. But when, in the last term of President Washington, dark clouds of war threatened the young republic, the island was thoroughly fortified by volunteers from the city, under the inspiring watchwords of "Free trade and sailors' rights," and since that time it has ceased to exist as a gubernatorial perquisite or a haunt of sylvan peace.

Apparently there must have been always something official about the long, narrow strip of Blackwell's Island in the East River, for it belonged to one of the Dutch Governors, and was known as The Long Island (the Indians called it Minnahannonck) at the time when the island which now passes by the latter name was known as Nassau Island. John Manning, who had been captain of a trading vessel between New York and New Haven, and had abandoned business for a commission in the colonial forces, was appointed sheriff of New York after its first conquest by the

British, and from the emoluments of the office made purchase of The Long Island. The bargain turned out to be a prudent one for him, and, moreover, during his incumbency the Duke of York, stirred to the very pocket by having the city named after his royal worthlessness, sent over a silver mace to be carried at the head of the procession of city magistrates, silken gowns faced with fur for the seven aldermen, liveries of blue and orange for the beadles and constables, and a crimson robe, cocked hat, and sword for the use of the sheriff. Nothing so magnificent as these civic dignitaries on parade had been seen in the little city. Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the sheriff or the town constable. But this gorgeous state of affairs was short-lived. The Dutch were slow to anger, yet at the end of five years news came that a Dutch fleet was on its way to the harbor, prepared and competent to blow the English fort and its defenders to atoms. Governor Lovelace went to Boston to seek help and Manning was left in command of the soldiers, when Admiral Evertsen poured a broadside into the city, and proved his ability to bring down its houses and fortifications over their ears. Manning surrendered, and after the city had been restored to the English by treaty, he was tried by court-martial, and sentenced to have his sword broken over his own head and to be forever barred from holding any public position. On a chill November day in 1674 the former part of the sentence was carried out in front of the City Hall—the old Stadt Huys on the Strand, at Coenties Slip. Disgraced as he was, Manning was by no means in despair, for his confidence in himself was unbounded, and his pockets were full

of money. With serene philosophy he retired to his East River island and the luxurious home he had constructed there, resolved to get as much enjoyment out of his physical life as was possible. Having money, he had friends, of course, and besides, the fame of his dinners went throughout the colony and pleaded his cause through the tender masculine stomach. His house became a synonyme of hospitality; his wit was a proverb, and he was pronounced the most elegant and agreeable of hosts. If he had been poor and penitent he would never have become popular. "So long as thou doest well unto thyself," said wise old King David, "men will speak good of thee."

Even in an earthly paradise the genial and unrepentant old adventurer could not live forever, and when he died the island was bequeathed to his daughter, who had married Robert Blackwell, to whom it owes the name it has borne for 200 years. The city became the purchaser of its 120 acres in 1828, paying for the island what would now be called the modest sum of $50,000, which was its full value then. It is a small municipality in itself, with a population of more than ten thousand persons. A glance and a thought suffice for Blackwell's, but the scene that breaks upon the eye beyond, where the river makes a sudden bend and reveals its swift waters rushing between promontories clad in living green and crowned with luxuriant foliage, where the eyes cannot decide whether to most admire the charms of the land or the wave, and only knows that the beauty of one sets off the loveliness of the other, calls for the brush of the great American painter that is to be. In the full glory of the moonlight it is superb.

As the old colonel rose to go home, we two graybeards started on a pilgrimage to the bedside of Master Felix Oldboy, Jr. My little boy loves everything that breathes and has legs, and after capturing two tiny mice had laboriously constructed a home for them for their protection from Neb. and Martha Washington, with a bay-window attachment in the shape of a revolving-wheel for their use. The old colonel had heard of it and came to me with a mutter of subterranean thunder: "Mice, indeed! Make a man of him and get him a gun!" and then trotted off and secretly gave the boy a quarter to buy wire with. We found him in his bed, rosy, placid, and sweet with sleep. On a chair close to his pillow was the house he had built for his mice, and from the wheel two pairs of eyes that seemed to be brilliant black beads were keeping watch upon their master. So he had always gone to bed with his newest treasures before his closing eyes or hugged to his heart. It was a picture I had never looked upon without being aware of the footsteps of approaching tears. I bent and kissed the child in his sleep, and the old colonel said that the light hurt his eyes, and, with a sudden "Good-night!" marched home.

The mice awoke and preached a sermon to me as their pink toes twirled the wheel of wire. It is just so, I said, with man and his toys of the hour. If sleep be the brother of death, when we stretch ourselves out for a long night's rest under a coverlet of grasses, how pityingly will the dear Father look down upon the wreckage of hopes and plans strewed around our couch, glad in His loving heart that He can wake us to better things to-morrow!

CHAPTER IV

HAPPINESS IN A CANAL-BOAT—PULPIT CRITICISMS—THE STORY OF WARD'S ISLAND—IN THE DAYS OF THE REDCOATS

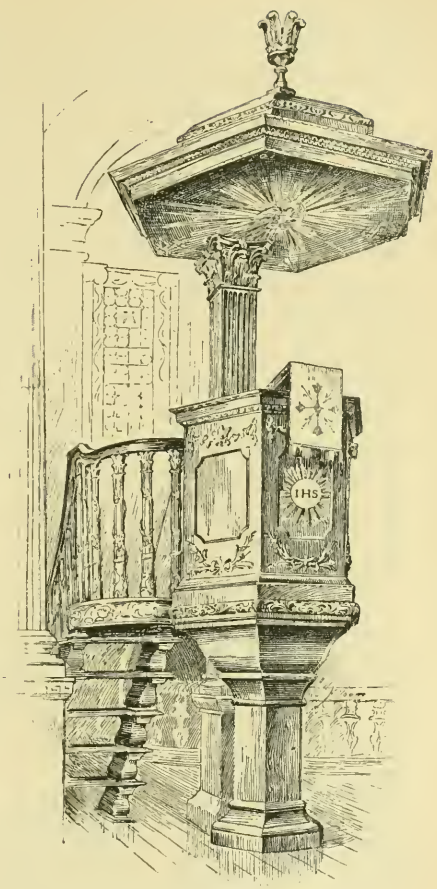
MY pet theory of acreage and happiness has received unexpected confirmation from a canal-boat. Ready as I am to maintain that one acre is enough for a home, and that its little circle of animal and vegetable life, its dreams and its realities, will suffice for a man's kingdom, I have been amazed to find that the horizon may be narrowed still further without fatal results. It is the revelation of a circus of tadpoles in a drop of water, and it came about as Master Felix and I were exploring the water-front towards Dead Man's Rock and wondering under what ledge bold Captain Kidd may have hidden his treasures, and whether the spook of the buccaneer, who was slain with a silver bullet and was said to haunt the Hen and Chickens, disappeared when that redoubtable array of rocks was blown into oblivion. At a dilapidated wharf just below Horn's Hook, still a grassy spot well grown with trees, was moored a weather-beaten canal-boat, laden with coal and vociferous with animated life. The venerable craft was the home of a wedded couple and their five children, and the seven inhabitants of the very small cabin and narrow ledges of deck seemed to be as happy a family as had come under my eyes for many a year. I watched the glee

with which the father and his three elder children—the eldest was a girl of twelve—fished a breakfast of tomcods and eels from the waters, while the mother was rocking the two younger ones to sleep down in the little cabin, and afterwards played softly to herself on an old accordion. They had but $9 a week to be happy on, yet somehow they seemed to manage it, and on Sunday they were bright and fresh in clean attire, and even the baby had new shoes. As I looked out at them from the rampart of my summer acre on the Sunday in which they had been paraded for inspection, I wondered whether the uncouth captain of the canal-boat would not by-and-by sail up the River of Life in better trim than many a fleet yacht that he envies as it sweeps by. Perhaps, however, it is an electric sympathy between a dilapidated canal-boat and a venerable mansion which has seen better days—and what marvellous yarns of land and sea they could exchange if acquainted and on speaking terms! — which has set me to moralizing in this vein.

The mention of Sunday reminds me to put it on record that we go to church in the morning of that day to old St. Paul's. I like it better than any of the modern Gothic temples. People speak of old Trinity, but it is a child in comparison with St. Paul's, which has fourscore years precedence in age. I have a friend living at the Astor House, the last scion of his family tree, who always marches solemnly out of church before the sermon. He says that he can stand the modern "Ja-fiddle-de-de-cob" style of singing, which, like all old-fashioned admirers of Coronation, Brattle Street, and Mear, I abominate, but he

does not think that more than one preacher in a generation is qualified to go up into the pulpit.

Yet no modern critic of the Manhattan pulpit can flatter himself that he is original. In 1679 two members of the mystic sect, known as Labadists in Holland, made a voyage to the New Netherlands to see what could be done in the way of securing proselytes. The men were no doubt sufficiently religious, but like many other good people they have left it on record that they were cranks of the first water. One Sunday they attended the old South Dutch Church in Garden Street, near Exchange Place, where they heard a sermon by Dominie Schaats, from Fort Orange, now Albany, and they wrote a criticism that was savage



PULPIT, ST. PAUL'S

enough for the most godless of newspapers. "He had a defect in the left eye," said the gentle Labadist, "and used such strange gestures and language that I never in all my life heard anything more miserable; we could imagine nothing but that he had been drinking a little this morning." The next Sunday these wandering evangelists went to hear the English minister, whose services took place after the Dutch church was out, and whom they scored unmercifully. "A young man went into the pulpit and commenced preaching," the keeper of the journal wrote, "who thought he was performing wonders; but he had a little book in his hand out of which he read his sermon—at which we could not be sufficiently astonished." I have heard remarks very much like the foregoing as a modern congregation has dispersed at the church door.

In the journal of their voyagings these wandering evangelists set forth that the Haarlem Creek, at its juncture with the East River, forms the two Barents Islands (Ward's and Randall's islands), and that Great and Little Hell Gate are renowned for their exceeding frightfulness. To these designations succeeded the names of Great and Little Barn islands, which seems to have been imposed on them at the time when Wouter Van Twiller saw that the land was good and that his flocks and herds could multiply at leisure upon its luxuriant soil. Van Twiller was one of that class of mortals who believe themselves men of destiny. As Governor of the province he laid his taxes right and left, and claimed his prerogatives in all quarters. He paid no public or private debts, and when the sheriff ventured mildly to insist that his

salary, then three years past due, should be paid, he had him arrested and clapped into jail. This gentleman farmed the Barn Islands, and the province had no little difficulty in wresting them from his hands.

There is a little island in the East River, off the foot of Ninty-third Street, where the boys who were my contemporaries used to go in swimming and find delight in the sandy beach, which was known in ancient times as Mill Rock, and on later maps was put down as Leland Island, but which the late generation greeted joyfully as Sandy Gibson's Island. Who is there of us whom the great leveller has spared at threescore who has not enjoyed a chowder at Sandy Gibson's homely house of refreshment, and often done execution among the striped bass for which those waters used to be famous? Ah! the fishing was famous then. Bass of mammoth size and lobsters of in-

MILL ROCK

credible weight yearned to be caught, and the Harlem River flounders were a dainty for an epicure. The glory of the bass has departed, the flounder is almost a hermit, and the lobster coyly hides his green back from the sportsman, though by night the lights of the boats launched by hungry souls who bob for eels are seen rising and falling between the Hog's Back and Nigger Head.

Of all the islands that lie scattered through the East River, Ward's Island is by far the most picturesque. Forty years ago it was a paradise; to-day it is so beautiful as to attract the praise of all visitors. With its undulating surface, originally covered with dense woodlands, it was designed by nature for a park, and in the growth of the city it ought to have been reserved for that purpose. Van Twiller knew what he was about when he converted its two hundred and forty acres into a pasturage for his cattle, and the British knew what they were about when they occupied it in September, 1776, and made use of it to keep the patriots at Harlem in check. In maps of the last century it was known as Buchanan's Island, and Lord Howe's topographical engineers placed a house at the north-east corner and a still at the south. It speaks volumes for the careful delineator of the map that every still-house in or near New York is faithfully put down, and a bayonet dug up this week in the vicinity of the old distillery on this island is significant of the tastes of the British soldier. At one time 5000 English and Hessian troops were camped on Ward's Island, but there is no record that an American soldier ever set foot upon its soil. In the south-west corner of the island, under the shade of ten or twelve majes-

tic oaks still standing, there were visible once, and not many years ago, half a dozen graves. The mounds were distinctly marked, and a bowlder stood at the head of each. One stone was of such size and shape as seemingly to designate superior rank on the part of the sleeper. The inhabitants spoke of them as Indian mounds, but it is more probable that the stones mark the graves of British soldiers, and that one of the number was an officer. The Indians never troubled themselves about headstones, and seldom sought the shade of trees for a grave, while instinct seemed to lead the white soldier to place his dead under the protecting arms of the oak or the elm.

After the War of the Revolution the island was divided up into farm lands, and its uplands became famous for their crop of cherries and apples. But presently the rage of speculation seized upon the owners of the western shore, and in 1812 a cotton-mill of solid stone, 300 feet in length and three stories in height, was erected on the grounds now occupied by the commissioners of emigration, and everybody connected with the enterprise was warranted to become wealthy. A wooden bridge, wide enough to accommodate a wagon, was thrown across the East River between One Hundred and Fourteenth Street and the north-western end of Ward's Island, on stone abutments, and a new era of prosperity was expected to begin for the old pasture grounds of Walter the Doubter. It was only a dream. The War of 1812 came with its terrible embargo; the mill could not get cotton from the South, and the enterprise failed. When the Emigration Board entered on its mission, forty years ago, it found use for the old mill, now de-

stroyed, but the bridge long before had gone to decay. Its stone abutments were removed after the steamer *King Philip* had been wrecked upon them. Our grandfathers were a queer people. They did not make much of a fuss about bridging the East River, and left posterity to imagine that it had been the first to accomplish the feat.

As I first remember Ward's Island it was clad with forests. Local historians speak of it as circular in shape, but it is really a rough square. Less than forty years ago it had great wood-clad bluffs on its eastern and western sides, and its dense woodlands were the haunt of rabbit and quail. The island is a picture to-night as I watch it from my eyrie below Horn's Hook. Amid its elms and wild-cherry-trees rise the minarets and towers of public buildings, and it were not difficult to fancy it a ducal preserve. In its atmosphere are the more or less fragrant memories of many dynasties of the past, and pleasant recollections of picnics and parties of pleasure on the bluff that commanded the East River passage, and that have long since mingled with the common dust.

CHAPTER V

MANHATTAN BIRDS AND FISHES — FEATHERED DENIZENS OF HELL GATE—PRIMEVAL HAUNTS ON THE CITY'S ISLANDS—A MATTER OF PISCATORIAL CONSCIENCE

It has been an unending amusement to watch the birds this summer. If I had been able to keep account of their number and variety, the catalogue would have surprised the unnoticing citizen who takes it for granted that the Island of Manhattan produces nothing but an interminable chorus of chattering sparrows. In the early spring the gulls were busy fishing in the waters of Hell Gate, and those brief strips of white cloud circling above the waves seemed at times to keep the whole air in motion. At the same time the crows were holding town meetings in the woods on Ward's and Randall's islands, finding their supper and breakfast on the marshes and sunken meadows, and in the forenoon flying in a great black cloud across the uplands of Astoria, to spend the day and take dinner somewhere on the shores of Long Island. When the gulls had disappeared, the bluebird, whom Thoreau paints with a touch as having "a bit of sky on its back," appeared one day on a syringa bush in the garden, and the same week I heard the piping of a robin in the big cherry-tree. Then I lost the record of the procession. In my journeyings up and down the river I have seen the sleek maltese coat

of the cat-bird, and frequently caught his song; have heard the bobolink and thrush tune their throats for a dash of melody, and kept still and watched until I could see the little chorister swaying on a bending mullein-stalk or a spear of sumach; have listened to the blackbird's liquid notes as he darted through the golden haze of sunset and flashed back to my eye the splash of crimson that lights up his sable wing, and once in a while I have detected the black and orange bearings of the oriole, the brilliant uniform of a scarlet tanager, or the blue and white of the swift-darting kingfisher. In these late August evenings, as the sun sinks down to rest, I like to sit and watch the westward flight across the Gate of myriads of swallows. They skim across the waters by twos, by tens, by hundreds, dipping with a swift, seemingly uncertain flight, yet moving in a concert of regularity which is a marvel to the dull wits of man. The other evening, as I was returning from my rounds and passed a bit of open land by the river, I saw that the electric wires which traversed it were occupied by legions of swallows, as closely clustered together as soldiers on parade, and as attentive, apparently, to the orders of a busy score of leaders. Presently the cries of the leaders ceased for a second, and the army took to the wing in battalions and brigades, and went through a series of manœuvres that may have been intended, so far as I know, as a drill for the awkward squad of youngsters who were to take part for the first time in the annual autumn movements of the New York brigade of swallows. Every night there is the same flight across the waters and over the islands, probably to an eyrie in the Palisades of the Hudson, and every

night the same evolutions, as necessary to swallows, no doubt, as to the geese whose migrations in serried phalanx I used to admire last spring, attracted by the shrill cry of the leader, who rang his defiant trumpet high up in air, as if in recognition of the Manhattan he knew in his childhood and was compelled to pass by without pause in his age, and whom we shall see again presently on the return march from northern conquests.

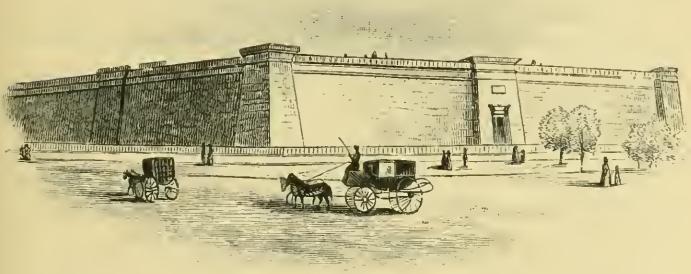
Of great fish-hawks I have seen half a dozen in these waters, and once, I am sure, it was an eagle that soared above the troubled tide to which he had long been a stranger. I could only wish him a safe and prosperous voyage, and immunity from the hands of those who are pleased to style themselves sportsmen. It was only yesterday that my breakfast was spoiled by reading a paragraph which stated that a rich man, who had once been to Congress, and aspired to be a politician, had shot an eagle, and intended to have him stuffed and presented to the Thingamy Association. Shot an eagle, indeed! Why, after that eagle had lived for a century or two, and died of old age, he ought to have had a public funeral, and half a dozen aldermen for pall-bearers. Shot an eagle, indeed!

I have been making an antiquarian tour of Ward's Island in company with Master Felix, and as I cared nothing for hospitals, asylums, and other such creations of the hand of improvement, I naturally inquired for the oldest inhabitant. He is an individual for whom I have always and everywhere a profound respect. His garrulity may become a bore sometimes, and I may not feel bound to believe half of what he tells me, but my own years are increasing, and there

is a possibility that at no remote period I may be called to step into his shoes. When I asked who was the oldest inhabitant of Ward's Island, the answer was, "Captain Bill," but it was less easy to discover that his last name was Millner. I found him a man of ruddy complexion, smiling eyes, and ready speech, but, to my surprise, only thirty years of age. His father, "old Captain Bill," had run the first ferry to the island, half a century ago, and his son, who was born in the old cotton-mill, had succeeded to his father's business, and had learned from him the legends of the island and its inhabitants—the people who gave up their homes and disappeared when State and city took their lands for public purposes. Only two or three houses remain of those that were standing fifty years since, and these are so dilapidated that they must soon follow in the steps of their builders. Projected improvements will wipe out the wild features of the landscape that yet remain, and there will be nothing for the antiquary to seize upon for a text here after the next century shall have begun its round.

"Yes, I've seen lots of changes since I was a boy," said Captain Bill, as he came up from the State barge which he commands, and stood at the head of the emigration dock, under corpulent willows that were set out forty years ago, and are already giving signs of decay. "I remember when a bluff fifty feet high rose at the end of the island, down there opposite Mill Rock, and this side of it stood the Gibson homestead. Both have gone, but you can see the cellar walls of the old house under the trees there, and so there have been changes all along the river-side, and if the old people were to come back they would not

know the place." He could not spare the time to guide me, but directed me where to go in the search for antiquities, and left us to ramble at our leisure—the boy and I on the site of a buried Troy. Yet it was not a buried city we desired to find—least of all, such as lay at our feet. For, half a century ago, the City of New York purchased seventy acres here—fairer and more picturesque than Greenwood—for a potter's field. Its last place of pauper interment had been on the site of the reservoir at Fifth Avenue and



RESERVOIR

Forty-second Street, and of Bryant Square, a site destined to become as aristocratic and exclusive for the living as had been the earlier potter's fields at Madison and Washington squares. The records say that 100,000 bodies were removed to this island, and as many more were brought here afterwards, and still rest in their unmarked graves, giving signs of their presence only now and again when the spade and pickaxe are busy among them. They have a pleasant resting-place, and, on the whole, they sleep well. A

millionaire could not find a more picturesque outlook than this slope that fronts on Hell Gate, if the trumpet woke him to-morrow to do his final sum in arithmetic in figuring up the profit and loss of a lifetime.

Our pilgrimage began at the south of the island, on a slope rising twenty feet above the swift tide, under a group of wild-cherry-trees, maple, and ailantus, amid an ancient garden overgrown with blackberry vines, and studded with juniper bushes, marked and guarded by an old apple-tree, near the ruined foundations of a house. It had been a handsome summer residence eighty years before, and when the great, bare slope to the eastward became the city's potter's field, this was the house of the keeper. Its ruins have forgotten the names of its former occupants. It does not take long in a city's lifetime to be forgotten. Not a hundred yards away a ploughshare turned up a huge slab of slate one morning in spring some eighteen years ago. The hind who held the plough was astonished to see a cavern yawning at his feet under the broken slab. He called his fellows, and they began to investigate. There was a flight of stone steps beneath, and an arch of brick above them. Slowly, and in doubt and fear, they descended. It was a burial-vault, carefully built to hold ashes that were to be tenderly kept. Within were fragments of broken wood, a few bones, a rusty coffin-plate or two, the mute memorials of those who had lived happily in the sunshine above. But the lettering on the plates was indecipherable, and no one has been able to tell the name and story of those they were intended to keep in remembrance.

Beyond the slope to the east lies a swamp, now

partly filled in, from which the last of half a dozen great cedars had just been cut. In the middle of this dreary stretch of forty acres is a swamp filled with reeds and cat-tails—the home of a vast colony of blackbirds. A quarter of a century since, this tract was known as "The Cedars," was covered with evergreens and brambles, and in its by-ways the pedestrian could easily lose himself. It was the home of rabbits and quail, and the local sportsmen here found game to their heart's desire in November days. It seems incredible as I look out on the swampy waste, but it will seem still more like a distant tradition when the tract is covered with stately buildings, as another generation will see it. At the foot of this part of the island the river current rages and swells over the reef known as Hog's Back, and around the dangerous promontory of bowlders called Nigger's Head.

We took no interest in the city buildings and public institutions, but going by the banks of the East River, and past its rocky ramparts that repeat on a miniature scale the wildness of the New England shore, we came to an old house by the shore that faces Astoria, and is occupied by employés of the city. It was the home of the Halliker family, and a generation ago was kept as a public-house by the head of the family, who was known then to the world of fishermen as "Uncle John." In that day the East River at his door was famous for its striped bass. That huge, shy, beautiful, game fish, born and reared where the water is wildest, seeking his food in sunken meadows, and taking his ease on the bottoms of rocky channels, where the current races like a young giant, found in the guests of "Uncle John" the foemen he

delighted to meet and fight. Gamest of fish in the water, and most delicious of all fish on the table, Little and Great Hell Gate bred him to perfection, and the stories that veteran fishermen tell of monsters that were drawn out and tipped the scales at forty pounds would excite the derision of all who do not know that the oil-works at Hunter's Point, and the presence of countless fleets on the waters, have driven him almost out of existence. Fishermen still seek and find him here, and they tell me of fish weighing ten to fifteen pounds being caught this season, and that one of twice the latter weight was caught in Hell Gate last year. I can only say that I wish I had been the one to catch him.

Beyond the Halliker house the massive stone foundations of another and larger house can be traced, and a stone wharf, overgrown with grass and shaded by willows, stretches out in front of it and is slowly falling to ruin. This was the locality of the old Red House, built long before the Revolution, and inhabited by the Lynes family. Beyond it, all the way to Little Hell Gate, and back to the Harlem River, used to stretch great orchards of apple, pear, and cherry trees. Most of the land is a waste meadow now, overgrown with wild strawberries and daisies in summer, and we find it just blossoming out in the rare brightness of thirty acres of golden-rod. But, passing this waste tract, we came to a place that was a delight to our hearts and a perplexity to our feet. It was thirty acres of alders, wild-cherries, and elms, ending to the west in a huge grove of wild-cherry-trees that seemed to have been set out by the hands of Druids in symmetrical rings around bowlders of trap and little pools

of water. Moss-grown and gnarled, those venerable trees could have told stories if they would—but they were impenetrably silent.

Master Felix and I entered the little wood boldly, and found ourselves in the land of enchantment. The city was a thousand miles away; civilization had been left far out of sight. Under the alders we tramped, up to our knees in strange grasses and forest flowers, finding here a hedge of blackberry-vines laden with fruit, and there a little stream whose banks were hedged with elders and reeds; seeing all about us beautiful bunches of ferns, and hearing everywhere above us the flitting of cat-birds, thrushes, and yellow-hammers. It was the little lad who suggested that we were Stanley's party, bound on exploration in the heart of Africa, and we could almost believe it, even with our eyes open. And when we emerged and tore our way to the water-side, through acres of bramble, it was still wild and uncanny to come upon the rushing tide careering over black rocks and sending up dashes of spray that recalled the sport of ocean. It is a pleasure to have seen, amid the woodlands of Ward's Island, and along its rocky, surf-swept shores, a last glimpse of primeval Manhattan.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE STORY OF THE EAST RIVER — MONUMENTS OF REVOLUTIONARY DAYS—A DEFEAT AT RANDALL'S ISLAND—THE PATRIOTISM THAT CLUSTERED ABOUT HELL GATE—CATCHING A SNOOK

PERHAPS it may be a weak ambition, but I should like to catch a snook before the season closes. I have not the least idea what sort of a fish the snook is, but the historian Van der Donck says that the waters of the East River abound in "snook, forrels, palings, dunns, and scolls," and I have fixed upon the most picturesque of the names, but have in vain questioned the lobster fishermen about his identity. The honest toilers of the wave look upon me, I find, with an eye of suspicion, not alone because of the unattainable snook, but because I repeated to them Van der Donck's story about catching lobsters in these waters that were from five to six feet in length. They smile, shake their heads with an air of gentle incredulity, and say nothing.

To whom are we to pin our faith, however, if not to the historian? Here is Peter Kalm, writing about New York a century after Van der Donck had gone to reap the reward of his veracity, who tells us that originally the honest Dutch fishermen sought for lobsters in vain, and they were brought in great well-boats from New England. "But," he explains, "it happened that one of these boats broke in pieces near

Hell Gate, about ten English miles from New York, and all the lobsters in it got off. Since that time they have so multiplied that they are now caught in the greatest abundance." It is mournful to think that the New Yorker of 1748 could play tricks upon travellers, but I am afraid that Mr. Kalm had fallen into the company of some amateur fishermen of that day. Yet it is delicious to read these musty volumes of travel, and to look through their eyes upon the Island of Manhattan and its surroundings. When, in the quiet of yesterday's sunset, Nellie said that she could fancy she heard the croaking of the frogs in the marshes beyond Horn's Hook, I took down the journal of Peter Kalm and pointed out a paragraph which followed his description of the trees that gave "an agreeable shade" to the streets of the little city. "Besides numbers of birds which make these their abode," he writes, "there are likewise a kind of frogs which frequent them in great numbers in summer. They are very clamorous in the evening, and in a manner drown the singing of the birds. They frequently make such a noise that it is difficult for a person to make himself heard." Poor man, the mosquitoes, which he always found troublesome, "did so disfigure" him at one time that he could not appear in public, and this may account for his prejudices on the subject of tree-toads and lobsters.

We are always finding something new in or about our ancient homestead, and this time we have made an important discovery. It was the old colonel who set it on foot. We had been speaking of the islands that day to the north and east of us; of how little the busy New Yorker recked of the orchards and meadow

lands, the stately willows and towering elms of Randall's Island, and how general was the ignorance of its history; wondering whence North and South Brother islands got their names, and talking over the days when Aunty Ackerson had her farm-house where the pest-houses of the city now stand, and raised her chickens under the shadow of Uncle Sam's light-house. As we paced up and down the path of the little bluff at the river's side in which the lawn ends, the old colonel stopped, pointed to an inequality in the ground, and said, "What's that?" I told him that it was probably a part of an old terrace. "Terrace!" he shouted; "and you are your grandfather's ghost, I presume. It's part of an earthwork, Felix." Mindful of the experience of the Pickwick Club in the case of "Bill Stumps, his Mark," I begged the colonel not to fire off the town pump. For be it known that at the announcement of peace in 1812, the good people of Hebron, in the land of steady habits, resolved to fire a salute, and to this end pulled up the town pump, had it banded with iron by the village blacksmith, loaded it up, and touched it off. The fragments of that unique piece of artillery were found in the next township, and its fate has been used as a warning against vaulting ambition ever since. But the old colonel persisted, and we went to work and caught our "snook." We had been on both sides of earthworks in piping times of war, and could not be mistaken in our conclusions. Besides, the record bears us out and shows that this acre was fighting ground in the days when redcoats were emblems of oppression.

Though the East River has been the scene of but little fighting, it has yet witnessed vast military prep-

arations; and in the withdrawal of Washington's army in the face of Howe's victorious legions, on the night of August 30, 1776, it saw one of those master movements which command the admiration of all military men. I sit on the back porch, and looking out upon the swift and turbulent waters, I try to recall the scenes of those days of yore, when a fleet of English ships rode up and down the river; when Howe sent troops in boats from Hallett's Point to occupy Buchanan's and Montressor's islands (as they were then called), and the scanty American garrisons evacuated the works along the front; when Sir Henry Clinton, with 4000 men, crossed the river in flat-bottomed boats from the mouth of Newtown Creek and landed at Kip's Bay under cover of a rattling cannonade from ten ships of war; when a fleet of thirty-seven war vessels and 400 transports threatened annihilation to the meagre little army with which Washington was retreating; when men were so plentiful and cheap in their capacity as food for powder that soldiers from Hesse were hired at the rate of $34.50 for every one killed, with the understanding that three wounded men were to count as one dead hireling, in the settlement of accounts; when these fat-witted Hessians garrisoned this very water-front and the redoubt that began in my garden and reached out to the north and west; when, after long years of occupation, the British flag was at length hauled down from

KIP'S HOUSE

every bastion and rampart on the Island of Manhattan, and peace came to deck these earthworks with the dandelion and the daisy.

Before the battle on Long Island, the American forces had fortified the most important points on the East River. A redoubt was cast up at Turtle Bay, between Forty-fourth and Forty-sixth streets; a breastwork at the shot-tower, foot of Fifty-fourth Street; a battery on the bold bluff at Seventy-fourth Street; another at the foot of Eighty-fifth Street; and a strong work, known as Thompson's battery, upon the jutting promontory at the foot of Eighty-ninth Street, then called by the name of Horn's Hook, and afterwards Gracie's Point. This fortification commanded the mouth of Harlem River and the narrow channel at Hell Gate. A small work was also erected on Snake Hill, now Mount Morris, in the park of that name. These were the fortifications mapped out by the engineers; but besides these there were earthworks erected to command every place at which a landing could be effected and intended as a protection for light field-pieces. The whole river-front bristled with the preparations for war, and in my boyhood the traces of the works were plainly visible at Turtle Bay, at Horn's Hook—then a beautifully shaded, grassy dell, and still retaining many of its old characteristics—and on the rocky and well-wooded bluffs that lay between. When the British took possession of the island, by a simultaneous descent on Turtle Bay and Horn's Hook, they found that the works which the Americans had erected were excellently adapted to their own defence, and they occupied and strengthened them. They had found out their value by experiment; for on the night

after the battle of Long Island a forty-gun ship that had passed the lower batteries and sought anchorage

in Turtle Bay had been hulled by round-shot from a field battery upon the high bank at Forty-sixth Street, and had been compelled to seek shelter in the channel east of Blackwell's Island.

As a boy I can vividly recall the picturesqueness of the small rock-bound cove of the East River known as Turtle Bay. The banks, which were high and precipitous, afforded a safe and snug harbor for small vessels. Here, in the year before the Declaration of Independence was signed, the British authorities had made a magazine of military stores, and these the

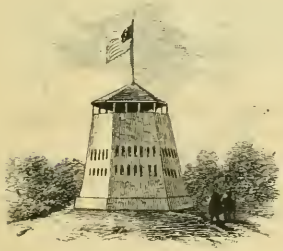
Sons of Liberty, whose names are on New York's roll of patriotic honor, determined to seize. They knew the ground well, and laid their plans so as to insure success. Under the direction of John Lamb and Marinus Willett, a chosen band of twenty secured a sloop at a Connecticut village on the Sound, swept down stealthily through the perilous channels of Hell Gate in the twilight, and at midnight surprised and captured the guard at Turtle Bay and secured the stores. The old storehouse in which these valuable munitions of war were deposited was yet standing, in my boyhood, upon a grass-grown wharf on the southern side of the little bay. It is gone now, and the view from the rocky heights is changed, but the memory of brave men in the days wherein patriotism was cradled lingers there yet.

This region saw other troublous times later on. In the summer and autumn of 1814, New York was thrown into a wild fever of excitement over a rumor that the Island of Manhattan was to be invaded by a British army. The defences were few and insufficient. DeWitt Clinton, the mayor, issued a stirring address to the people to give their personal services to aid in the completion of the unfinished fortifications of the city. Four days later 3000 persons were at

TURTLE BAY

work, and even the city newspapers suspended publication in order to give a helping hand. The men who handled pick and spade were journeymen printers, college students, sons of Erin, members of Asbury African Church, pilots, masons, and many heads of manufacturing establishments. School-teachers and their pupils went out together to give their aid, and urchins who were too small to lift a spade carried earth on shingles to add their mite to the breastworks. Such was the magnificent display that New York made of its heart of fire; and when the works were completed, every lad who could carry a musket on his tender shoulders offered himself to be enlisted for the war.

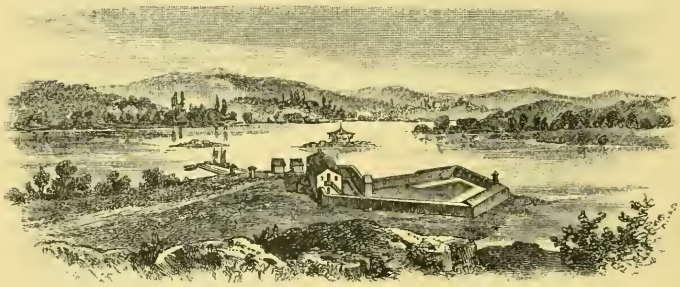
OLD STOREHOUSE AT TURTLE BAY



TOWER AT HALLETT'S POINT

To guard against invasion by way of Long Island Sound, the fortifications built upon the East River during the Revolution were strengthened, and new ones were erected. Hell Gate and the channels of the East River were occupied by batteries, some of which were protected by towers. On Hallett's Point quite an extensive work was laid out, and named Fort Stevens. In its rear, on Lawrence Hill,

which commanded a wide sweep of land and water, a stone tower was erected, which stood there until recently, when the hill was levelled. On Mill Rock, where in late years Sandy Gibson built his rustic bower of refreshment for wearied fishermen, a very strong block-house and a powerful battery were placed, adding to the already sufficient terrors of rock and current. The fort at Horn's Hook was renewed; redoubts were built at Rhinelander Point and at the mouth of Harlem Creek; and at Benson's, nearly on a line with the present Second Avenue, was a smaller earthwork intended to guard the mill-dam and fording-place on the creek. Intrenchments extended back to Benson's Creek, which then emptied into Harlem



FORT STEVENS AND MILL ROCK

River at the cove. At the head of Harlem Creek was the beginning of a parapet and ditch, which ran to Fort Clinton, on an elevated rock, now known as Mount St. Vincent, in the north-eastern part of Central Park. These defences bristled with the paraphernalia of war when completed, but the enemy never came to test them. The ploughshare and pick-

FORT CLINTON AND HARLEM CREEK

axe have almost obliterated them and left but the merest fragment here and there by way of remembrance. The roll-call of the Destroyer has been even more busy among the battalions of their defenders. Yet to-day I number among my friends, still erect and stalwart, though approaching the century milestone of his life, a gallant, white-haired gentleman who, in the ruddy strength of eighteen years, marched out under the command of Capt. Thomas Addis Emmet to do his devoir as a soldier of freedom. Emmet, who died in a court-room in the city while pleading an important case, lies buried under the shadow of old St. Paul's.

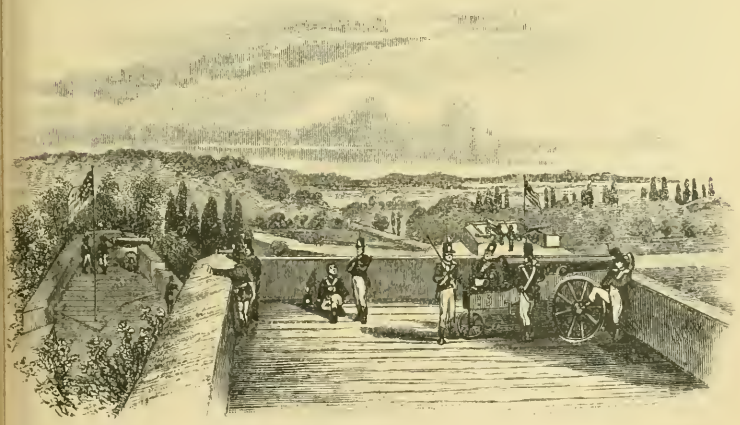
We were talking the other day about the islands in the East River, the old colonel and I, and he expressed his surprise that they had so long been a sealed book to him, as they yet were even to the New Yorker to whom they came as a territorial heritage. Did you ever hear, I inquired, that a battle had been fought upon one of them? and he confessed that it had taken him eighty years to find it out. Then I told him the story of the engagement at Randall's Island, which was known to military map-makers as Montressor's Island, on a September evening, in

1776.* On this island the British had placed a quantity of ammunition and stores, and the Americans determined, if possible, to seize them. A week after the brilliant and successful battle of Harlem Plains a battalion of 250 picked men, under command of Colonel Jackson, of Massachusetts, guided by Major Henly, aide-de-camp to General Heath, made a descent upon the British at Montressor's Island, with the idea of giving the redcoats a surprise. It was a dark night, September 24th, and the plans were well laid, and would have been successful had not an impetuous soldier discharged his gun prematurely. As it was, the little column charged bravely against the earthworks that were defended by twice their numbers.

* In the course of writing these papers, I find that the island to which we give the name Randall was known to our fathers as Randel's Island, and the weight of testimony seems to give weight to the latter designation. Originally known as Little Barent's Island, this was corrupted into Little Barn Island. When Elias Pipon bought it in 1732 he built a substantial house there, into which he removed his family, and christened it Belle Isle. Fifteen years later George Talbot purchased the property, settled on it, and gave it his own name. In 1772 he sold the island to Capt. John Montressor, who resided there when the British troops occupied it, and on the maps of the period it is designated as Montressor Island. The island passed into the hands of Samuel Ogden in the spring of 1784, but he had no chance to change its name, for in the fall of the same year he sold it to Jonathan Randel for the sum of £24. It was from the executors of this gentleman that the city purchased the island for $50,000 in 1835, and the city has evidently sought to perpetuate the memory of its last owner, but has disagreed with him in the manner of spelling his name. However, it is the misfortune of a hero killed in battle to have his name misspelled in the despatches, and it is probably too late to do justice to the memory of Brother Jonathan. "My little dear," said the genial showman to the little girl who asked him which of the animals was a camel and which a hippopotamus, "you pays your money and you takes your choice."

It was a magnificent but useless display of gallantry. The assaulting column was repulsed with the loss of twenty-two men—as many as had been slain on Harlem Plains. Among the killed was Major Henly, who was shot at the head of his men and while cheering them on. His body was recovered, carried back to the American camp, and buried by the side of Colonel Knowlton, hero of the engagement of the week before, within the embankments of a redoubt on the lofty bank of the Harlem River. The prominent outlines of the earthworks on that wooded promontory and the old road down the steep hill to the cove beyond High Bridge have but very recently given way to the touch of time and improvement. It was a sad surprise to the Americans, this first and only battle on the islands of the East River.

"The Americans were scooped, weren't they?" inquired Master Felix. Now, I hate slang of any sort,



FORT FISH

and yet I have been forced more than once to admit that it is very expressive in the way of phraseology, and that much of it is very good English. So, as I meditated upon a proper method of rebuke, it occurred to me that the word might be of Dutch derivation, and turning to my library I became convinced that it was so. For a traveller from Holland, who passed through "the island of Manathans" 200 years ago, has left it on record that when he reached Nieu Haerlem he stopped at the house of one Geresolveert (that is, his Christian name was "Resolved"), who was a scoup, or constable, of New Amsterdam. Evidently he was the right sort of man for his business, for the guileless traveller adds that his house was "constantly filled with people all the time, drinking for the most part an agreeable rum." The inference from his titular designation is irresistible. It is plain that the scoup who gathered in offenders against the laws has enriched the dictionary of slang with one of its most expressive words. Master Felix is right. The Americans were scooped.

CHAPTER VII

PANORAMA OF ANCIENT EAST RIVER HOMES — A LOW DUTCH FARM-HOUSE—AT TURTLE BAY FARM—THE GROVE IN THE WOODS—OLD GRAVES AT THE WATER-SIDE.

NELLIE and the old colonel are walking in the flower-garden, with their heads close together, and as intent on each other as if they were a pair of lovers. They are often at the river-side, finding endless entertainment, apparently, in the beautiful panorama of the East River. The garden has flourished all summer under my daughter's dainty hands. Roses, hollyhocks, and lilies have ceased to bloom, but the beds are gay with marigolds, lady's-slippers, petunias, Indian-shot, cockscomb, mignonette, and the white, purple, and pink blossoms of the morning-glory. For my own pleasure I planted a cluster of sunflowers, and a score of sturdy disks of gold turn themselves to the monarch of day as he wheels across the sky, and sway with the winds. On the other side of the broad path, the corn, pumpkins, and tomatoes flourish luxuriantly, to the delight of black Diana's heart, and Nebuchadnezzar and his kindred have made discovery of a bed of catnip, among whose fragrant stalks they roll and twist their lithe bodies with perhaps a dim remembrance of ancestral tiger days in the jungle.

As I look out upon my little kingdom of petunias and tomatoes the thought comes to me, that after

man had been created the first care of his Creator was to make a garden for him. "And the Lord God planted a garden," says the record. Then follows a glimpse of home and its comforts in the narration that "out of the ground" grew "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." It is a homely picture, perhaps, to be inserted by the side of the canvas on which chaos and the birth of a world are painted, but I understand it here with my garden spread before me, and can even fancy how lonely it must have been for Adam, with all its fresh, young beauty, when he had only his cats to keep him company. Those figures coming towards me, the daughter whose years have not yet reached a score and the friend and comrade whose summers are climbing up into five score, bear witness to my heart with every step that "it is not good that the man should be alone," and my tongue instinctively hails them. "What are you two plotting against—the peace of this commonwealth?" "Felix," said the old colonel, solemnly, "ask the cats. They have heard us, and you ought to know their language by this time." My daughter smiled mischievously, and said, "Do you remember what your grandmother used to tell you, when you asked what she was to give for dessert?" I could but smile. The mention of my grandmother, the unforgotten guardian of the golden days of life's fairyland —the magic epoch which every man recalls with a touch of tender reverence in his voice as he utters the time-worn preface "when I was a boy," always brings a smile and peace.

Once more I am in the old-fashioned dining-room, where my grandmother sits stately and dignified at

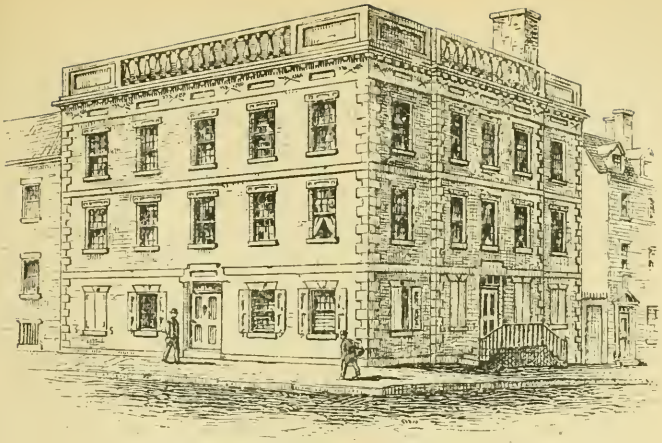
the head of the table of polished mahogany, on which mats do service for table-cloth, under the service of priceless china; where Abraham, the colored waiter, whose mother had been my grandmother's slave, stands behind her chair, erect as a grenadier; where an impatient urchin, whose great gray eyes and rounded cheeks I have long ceased to see in the glass, is seated in torture on a straight-backed chair, which he abominates, and I know he has put a question, for

MECHANICS' BELL TOWER

across the polished surface of the dark mahogany comes a dignified utterance which is strangely in contrast with the love that I never failed to find in my grandmother's eyes—"Wait and see!"

It was natural that we should fall into talk once more of our favorite theme, the beauties of the East River shore of the Island of Manhattan, and that the

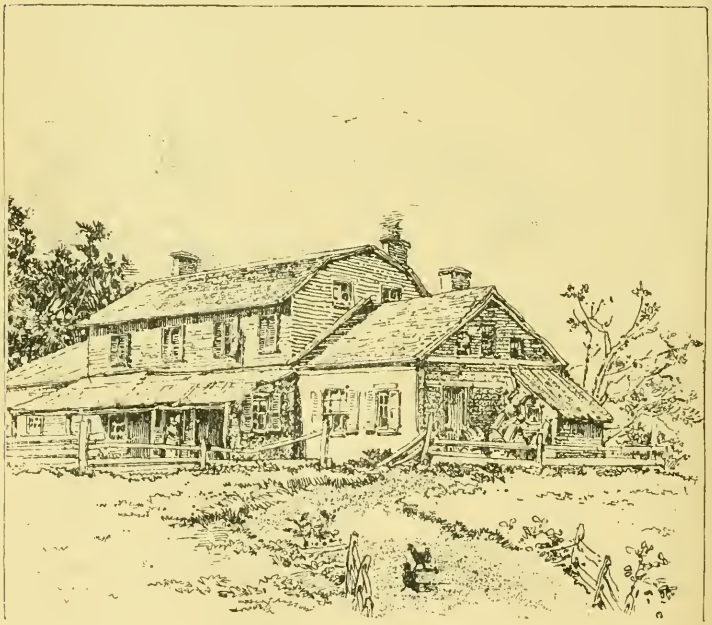
old colonel and I should compare recollections of the days when it was peerless for scenery. The tourist now sees a succession of docks, broken here and there by rocks on which shanties have been thrown together, by the remains of a bluff, which recalls the terraces of a gentleman's country-seat in the past, by the ghosts of some old houses that were mansions of wealth in the past, or by a house and garden here and there, decayed but still genteel, bent upon keeping up appearances to the last. Some few landmarks still survive. The old mechanics' bell, which for nearly sixty years has rung out the hours of work and dinner over the ship-yards of the Eleventh Ward, and whose music is one of the recollections of my boyhood—recalling days when I "played hookey" from school in order to witness a launch, and the clangor of the bell was a sort of brazen conscience that took the edge off my enjoyment—still stands and keeps up its warning of the flight of time, close by the East River, at the foot of Fourth Street. The old shot-tower yet looms up hard by the foot of Fifty-third Street, and people who wish to speak of the neighborhood begin as of yore with the preface: "You know where the old shot-tower is," as if everybody had known it from infancy. The rocky height known as Dead Man's Rock, that used to mark the beginning of Jones's Wood half a century ago, and that still has the same name, is there yet, but has become ignoble as the boundary of Battle Row, all too well known in police annals. And at Horn's Hook, opposite Hallett's Point, a group of great elms still sway in the breeze as they did in the days when Halleck and Paulding and Irving walked beneath their shade.



THE WALTER FRANKLIN HOUSE

The East River was by nature so much more picturesque than the Hudson, that the wealth and fashion of the little City of New York fixed upon it in the early part of the last century as a choice spot for country-seats. Pearl Street had become noted in the colony for its stately mansions, with gardens stretching to the water-side. Then came the cluster of aristocratic dwellings at Franklin Square, the estate of Rutgers, the farms of the Bayards and De Lanceys, the seat of Marinus Willett at Corlear's Hook, the boweries of Peter Gerard Stuyvesant and his brother Nicholas Stuyvesant, and beyond these, for four miles up the river, the early part of this century witnessed the erection of a large number of elegant villas—like the Coster mansion near Thirtieth Street, on the river-bank, a stately edifice in the Grecian style of architecture, which, in my boyhood, was the country residence of Anson G. Phelps. But even as a boy I had more interest in the historic homes of the Kip and

Beekman families. I remember both of these houses well. The Kip mansion, erected in 1655 by Jacobus Kip, was a large double structure, with three windows on one side of the door and two on the other, and with an ample wing besides. It was built of brick imported from Holland, and a stone coat of arms of the Kip family projected over the doorway. It was the oldest house on the island when it was demolished in 1851, and Thirty-fifth Street and Second Avenue now pass over its site and give no sign of its existence and story. Neither Oloffe, the dreamer, nor Heinrich Kip, whose great goose gun was the terror of prowling Indians, would now recognize the place



JACOB HARSEN HOUSE

that even in my recollection was encompassed by pleasant trees and sweet with grassy meadows that were reflected in the sparkling waters of the little bay.

In Turtle Bay, half a mile above, the British ships of war used to find safe harbor in the storms of winter, and here Lord Howe found a convenient landing-place when he invaded the island and drove out "the rebels." On a knoll above the bay and overlooking it stood, near Forty-first Street, the summer residence of Francis Bayard Winthrop, whose estate was known as the Turtle Bay farm. There was a grist-mill on this place, fed by a brook that took its rise in the lower part of the present Central Park. It was known, before the time of the Winthrops, as De Voor's mill-stream, and where it crossed Fifty-fourth Street, between Second and Third avenues, just below "Old Cato's" on the Eastern post-road, there used to be a wooden bridge of which the Rev. Mr. Burnaby, a traveller in these parts in 1759, says: "In the way there is a bridge, about three miles distant from New York, where you always pass over as you return, called the Kissing Bridge, where it is a part of the etiquette to salute the lady who has put herself under your protection." Mr. Burnaby speaks as if he had made trial of the etiquette of the day, and evidently he found it soothing if not pleasant, for he utters not a word of protest. The lady's opinion is not given, but she must have known the penalty, and in a rural scene like this rusticity is pardoned. The mill, the brook, the bridge, the fields silvered in the moonlight, the river a few rods away, a wilderness of woodlands at one side and the spires of the city rising three miles away—can it be that it is of the centre of a busy, bustling

metropolis that these words are written and this picture painted ?*

There is one landmark of which I have not spoken, and that is yet the most notable of those that remain. Close by the old shot-tower stands a house that is a perfect specimen of the Dutch architecture of two centuries ago, and is probably the oldest building in the city. Long before the War of the Revolution it was known as the Spring Valley farm-house. Out-

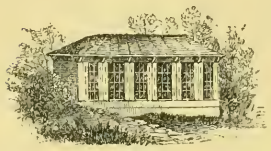
* In 1809, when the commissioners of streets and roads were laying out the plan of the new city above Houston, then North Street—a plan which, owing to the accuracy of the survey made by John Randel, Jr., their engineer, has stood the test of sixty years without revealing a mistake — the Bowery was the principal road leading to Harlem and to King's Bridge. At the present Madison Square the Eastern post-road diverged from the Bloomingdale Road, crossing Fourth Avenue near Twenty-ninth Street, and passing through the hamlet known as Kip's Bay, or Kipsborough, which lay to the west of Third Avenue and extended from Thirty-second to Thirty-eighth Street. Thence it swept towards the west, close to the Croton reservoir at Forty-second Street, made another bend, and crossed the road to Turtle Bay on the East River, at Third Avenue, between Forty-seventh and Forty-eighth streets. Sweeping still to the east, it crossed Second Avenue at Fifty-second Street, crossed it again at Sixty-second Street, and then followed the line of Third Avenue, passing Harsen's cross-road at Seventy-first Street. At Seventy-seventh Street and Third Avenue it crossed a small stream known in the last century as the Saw-Kill, and Mr. Randel assures us that the bridge which spanned this stream was known to all the young men and women of his day as the Kissing Bridge. But the English historian of the last century, and a clergymen to boot, assures us that the Kissing Bridge was the edifice of plank that crossed De Voor's mill-stream at Fifty-fourth Street, between Second and Third avenues, while a solemn Dutch historian of the seventeenth century, whose seriousness is not to be doubted, has placed it on record that the original and genuine Kissing Bridge was the one which crossed the stream that rippled down through Pearl Street from the Collect Pond and crossed the post-road—now Park Row—at the intersection of that street.

JACOB ARDEN HOUSE

side, the walls are clapboarded, but an inside view discloses the massive stone and the huge cross-beams hewed out of solid oak. The grading of the street has made an additional story of the cellar, but originally the house had a single story and attic, with long sloping roof and ample porches—the very ideal of Knickerbocker rest and luxury. A generation ago it was known as the Brevoort estate and house; before that time it bore the names of Odel and Arden, but the builders belonged to the family who gave their name to the mill-stream, and whose name, like that of many another old Dutch family, is spelled in a different way each time that it is written, as thus: Duffore, Deffore, Devoor, Devore, and De Voor. The original grant of sixty acres was made by Sir Edmund Andross to David Duffore in 1677, and the spelling of the name is changed in each successive deed on record.

There is another venerable house standing on East Sixty-first Street, near Avenue A, which was completed just before the Revolution as a summer residence for Colonel William S. Smith, who had married the only daughter of Vice-President John Adams. It is emphatically a mansion, with two huge wings joined together by a portico in front and an extension in the rear, and its erection, together with an unfortunate speculation in East River real estate, bankrupted the owner before his work was completed. The records show that his possession of the thirty acres he had bought from Peter Prau Van Zandt was very brief. Much more of an old-time mansion was the Beekman House, which, until 1874, stood near the corner of Fifty-first Street and First Avenue. In its later days it had fallen from its high estate into shabby disrepute, but

neither the hand of time nor the presence of a troop of ragged tenants could destroy its dignity. About it clustered more historic recollections than were attached to any other house in the city, and the pen of Madame Riedesel, wife of the general who surrendered with Burgoyne, has immortalized it. Howe, Chester, and Carleton held possession of it more than seven years, and during that time it was the scene of the trial and condemnation of Captain Nathan Hale, the martyr spy of the Revolution. Its greenhouse, in which the latter is said to have passed his last night on earth, and its extensive gardens, fell with all their glories twenty years before the old mansion gave up the ghost, but I recall them every time the train whirls me over their grave.



THE BEEKMAN GREENHOUSE

What a place of delight Jones's Wood used to be in the olden days! It was the last fastness of the forest primeval that once covered the rocky shores of the East River, and its wildness was almost savage. In the infant days of the colony it was the scene of tradition and fable, having been said to be a favorite resort of the pirates who dared the terrors of Hell Gate, and came here to land their treasures and hold their revels. Later, its shores were renowned for its fisheries, and under the shadow of its rocky bluff and overhanging oaks the youth of a former generation cast their lines and waited for bites. The ninety acres which composed the wooded farm that was known in olden times as the Louvre passed through many hands until it came into the possession of the Provoost fam-

COLONEL SMITH'S HOUSE

ily in 1742, and here they built and occupied for nearly sixty years. Then they deeded their broad acres to Mr. John Jones, reserving the family vault and the right of way thereto. The old graves are there yet, but the ancient chapel has been transformed into a club-house, and the youthful athletes of to-day play leap-frog among the tombstones.

It was the custom of the early settlers to have their dead laid to rest near the home of the living, and it was not until as late as 1802 that the family vault of the Bayards, at the foot of Bunker Hill—now at the crossing of Grand and Mulberry streets—was demolished. The home of the Provoosts, near the foot of Seventy-first Street, and the family vault, cut in a rocky knoll near by and covered with a marble slab, lay in neglected ruin long after the woods had become a favorite resort for picnic parties. The Provoosts were a remarkable family, connected as they were with some of the old historic families of Manhattan. Samuel Provoost, whose mother was daughter and heiress of old Harman Rutgers, was an assistant minister of old Trinity when the war broke out. Being a thorough American at heart, his preaching gave offence to the Tories and he was deprived of his position and sent into retirement, to emerge triumphantly afterwards as the first Bishop of New York and President of Columbia College, his *alma mater*.

A cousin of the bishop, David Provoost, better known in his day and generation as "Ready-money Provoost," was quite another character. A soldier in Washington's army, and wounded at the battle of Long Island, he became in after-years a noted smuggler, having his chief stronghold at Hallett's Point,

and successfully defying the officers of the law to the end of his wild career. He always had a reason for his faith, and as he had plenty of money, his reasons were listened to with the deference that wealth commands. He had fought against England and taxation, he said, only to be more pestered with custom-houses than ever. With an assumed roughness of diction, which was really foreign to his education or social position, he made his defence openly, and to a merchant who took him to task, said: "I'm for making an honest living by free-trade. There's Congress just been introducing a tariff, as they call it, and Madison, Carroll, and old Roger Sherman and all on 'em are voting for it, but by the Eternal, old 'Ready Money' will stand by his 'reserved rights,' as they call 'em away there in Virginny, and nullify the custom-house laws as long as the 'Pot' boils in Hell Gate!" The fiery old smuggler was laid to rest in the family vault, by the side of his wife, at the ripe age of ninety. Long afterwards the boys used to gather there and tell each other wonderful stories of the unearthly doings of the old man's ghost. Not one of them could have been persuaded by all the ready money in the city to keep a night's vigil under the trees that overhung the lonely, desolate grave. Music, dance, and merrymaking must have exorcised it, however obstinate, long ago.

The September sunshine, which through the last two weeks of drought has seemed to be filled with gold dust, has sprinkled the lawn with a fresh crop of dandelions. If this humble little flower were an inmate of the greenhouse, it would adorn fair bosoms and win extravagant admiration, for its beauty is unquestioned. But it keeps on its way quietly, and per-

haps is happier in the lessons it teaches of home joys and fireside affections. It belongs to the home, and I have seen men pause and watch a dandelion that had strayed into a tiny square of grass in front of a city house, and was sure that I knew what was in their hearts.* I knew their thoughts had gone back to the farm on which they had been reared, the dooryard filled with dandelions, and the faces at the window that had watched their departing steps years before. It was this remembrance that, in a railroad cut across the river the other day, turned fifty faces towards a single yellow flower that had somehow taken root and blossomed in a rocky crevice twenty feet above the level of the tracks. Solitary amid the rocks, beautiful by its contrast to the rough stone, the little dandelion sat there and bloomed and sent out its reminders of home and fireside as no grand lily or radiant rose could have done.

No, Diana. Tell the man that I do not want to have the grass cut.

* Henry Ward Beecher wrote a characteristic paper upon precisely this subject—a single dandelion in a city front-yard. Mr. Beecher retained such liking for his own little essay that not long before his death he read it at one of the "Authors' Readings" in the Madison Square Theatre.—L.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HELL GATE COLONY — GLIMPSES OF EAST RIVER HOMES — ST. JAMES'S CHURCH — THE ASTOR COUNTRY-HOUSE — WHERE IRVING WROTE "ASTORIA" — THE HOME OF ARCHIBALD GRACIE — NEW YORK AND ITS VISITORS

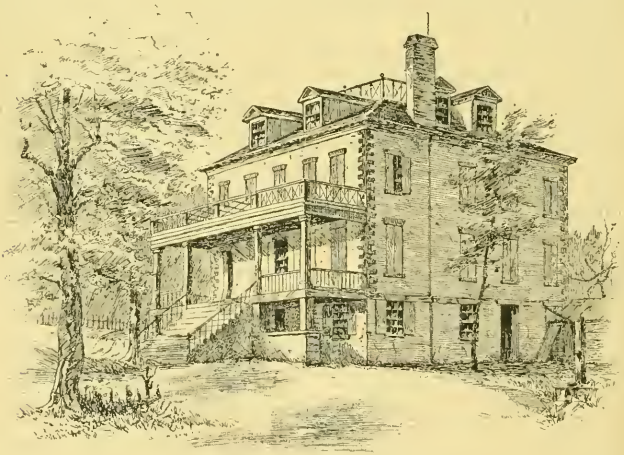
THE memory of my school-days haunts me even to the boundaries of my summer acre. For on the East River is a tract of land which covers eight or nine blocks, and extends from Seventy-sixth Street to beyond Seventy-ninth Street on the water-front, which is the property of the New York Protestant Episcopal Public-school, which is the charter name of the Trinity School of my boyhood. Founded in 1709, it was partially endowed by Trinity Church, and received this bequest of valuable real estate in 1800 from Mr. Baker, and in 1806 was incorporated by the Legislature. Taxes and assessments have swallowed up half of this land; the school had no friends in the city government to protect its interests, and had to see its property forfeited while the City Fathers were lavishing lands and appropriations on the Church of Rome. In 1832 the vestry of Trinity Church granted to the trustees, at a nominal rent, the lease of five lots of ground in Canal, Varick, and Grand streets, on which was erected a large brick school-house, that is still standing, though the school has moved its headquarters three miles away. Here the Rev. Dr. Morris, a robust, scholarly, jolly graduate of Trinity College,

Dublin—strict in discipline, but foremost in our out-door sports—wielded the rod diligently for nearly five-and-twenty years. I have pleasant remembrances of his reign; of wrestlings with Anthon's Homer and Greenleaf's Arithmetic; of uproarious singing which sorely vexed Dr. Hodges, our musical instructor, and of learning to flourish birds and skeletons under Mr. Barlow, our elegant writing-master, who always officiated in a dress-coat; as well as of countless merry games of "Red Lion" and "How Many Miles?" in the playgrounds of the school.

Our ancestors had a queer way of mixing up what we would now call the sacred and the profane. They went to church regularly, as a matter of duty, and quite as regularly they went to the theatre also. Governor and mayor had their canopied pews at the one place and their curtained boxes at the other, and nobody appeared to think the worse of them for going to either place. When a struggling congregation needed help to build a church, the authorities would order a lottery to raise money for the purpose, and when a charitable enterprise needed a helping hand they would secure it a benefit at the theatre. Only last week I discovered in the files of the *New York Gazette, Revived in the Weekly Post-boy*, for March 26, 1750, an advertisement which recited that "by his excellency's permission"—Admiral George Clinton was then governor of the colony—"a tragedy called 'The Orphan; or, the Unhappy Marriage,' wrote by the ingenious Mr. Otway," would be performed the next evening at the theatre in Nassau Street for the benefit of the Episcopal Charity-school, as Trinity School was first termed, whose school-house had been

recently destroyed by fire. The advertisement, after giving the prices of admission, concludes with a delightful warning to the gilded youth of the period: "To begin precisely at half an hour after 6 o'clock, and no person to be admitted behind the scenes."

Just below the school lands were the summer residences of Richard Riker and John Lawrence. The former was for nearly half a century a well-known character in the city. In his dashing youth "Dickey" Riker was the mirror of fashion; in his limping old age he was known to the legal fraternity as "Old Pecooler," from his habit, as recorder, of beginning almost every charge to his juries with the remark that there was something "very pecooler," as he phrased the word peculiar, about the case in question. With the exception of two years, Mr. Riker filled the office of recorder from 1815 to 1838. His pretty cottage on the East River, whose broad veranda, shaded by oaks



RICHARD RIKER'S HOUSE

on either side, was then a bower of rest and lovely scenery, no longer exists, for Seventy-fourth Street passes directly over its site and through the grassy knoll on which it was situated.

Some of the old residences, frame structures that were erected seventy or eighty years ago, still stand, though their surroundings are all changed, and it seems a pity that they have survived the destruction of the green fields and graceful bits of forest that surrounded them. Ancient Ash Brook—as the old Lawrence mansion at the foot of East Twenty-fifth Street used to be called—the home in my boyhood of John Lawrence, merchant and man of affairs, continues to defy Time's ravages, and is yet embowered in a lovely garden that occupies nearly a city block, shut in by a high brick wall. The pretty little stream long known as Ash Brook has been stamped out by pavements, but there are some oaks still standing there that can recall the music of its ripples. At Eighty-second Street and Avenue B is the country residence of Joshua Jones, a long wooden structure of olden fashion, with a gallery on the roof, and the usual broad verandas in front and rear. Two blocks above, the homestead of the Schermerhorn family, a more ambitious structure of two stories and a half, surmounted by a cupola, still looks out towards Hell Gate and the islands. The family owned at one time considerable real estate in this section, and several houses were built by and for the younger members. Their neighbors were the Jones families, the Winthrops, Dunscombs, Kings, John Wilkes, a lawyer, whose city house was in Wall Street, and who was a relative of the famous and eccentric English Member of Parliament

of that name; Josiah Ogden Hoffman, Charles King, and John N. Grenzebach, whose father's grocery store on Park Row had been an ancient city landmark. The latter's estate was at Third Avenue and Seventy-fifth Street, and the house was an ambitious frame structure of three stories, which for nearly half a century attracted notice as a relic of a luxurious period in the past.

The little colony of citizens who had their country places hereabouts were mainly Episcopalians, and in the summers, which were unduly prolonged for them by yellow-fever visitations, they felt the need of a church. When, in 1807, the city corporation thought of improving their common lands, which then extended from about Forty-fifth to Eighty-sixth Street, they laid out a park between Sixty-sixth and Sixty-ninth streets and Third and Fourth avenues, on whose grounds now stand the Seventh Regiment Armory, the Normal School, and several hospitals, and called it Hamilton Square. A plot of land at Lexington Avenue and Sixty-ninth Street was marked, on the map then made, as "a piece of land intended for a church or academy." For this lot application was made to the authorities, and the vestry of Trinity Church was petitioned for assistance. Both requests were granted, the common council giving the land, and Trinity Church a gift of $3000. The church, afterwards known as St. James's, Yorkville, was consecrated in 1810 by Bishop Moore. It was not much of a building, architecturally speaking. Indeed, it was a plain wooden structure, of the house-carpenter style of architecture, surmounted by a little pepper-box sort of a steeple. But what mattered its style?

It had no rival within sight. For fifteen years after it was finished Yorkville had no existence, not a house having been built on the common lands. It was a country church, amid outlying farm lands. Situated on the summit of Hamilton Hill, it was a landmark for miles around. A road crossed the island just above it, at Seventy-second Street, known as Harsen's Road, and through this rural lane came the rector of St. Michael's, Bloomingdale, to preach on summer mornings, when the sacred edifice was beset on all sides by the carriages of the rich and the wagons of humbler folk. For thirty years there was only summer preaching in this old country church, and then the town had grown up about it, and it threw away its Bloomingdale crutch and walked alone. Park, church, and farms have been obliterated, and yet I turn from the river's side and look westwardly, and fancy that I can once more see the familiar old pepper-box spire which I was taught in boyhood to reverence. The hand of the destroyer who wields the pick is mighty, but more potent still is the slight, gentle touch of memory.

The first vestry of the church was selected in 1810. The wardens were Peter Schermerhorn and Francis B. Winthrop. The vestrymen were David Mumford, John Mason, John G. Bogert, Peter Schermerhorn, William H. Jephson, John Jones, John H. Talman, Charles King; and the inspectors of election were Joshua Jones, Martin Hoffman, and Isaac Jones. In 1843, when the church first called a minister of its own, the wardens were Joseph Foulke and Peter Schermerhorn, and among the vestrymen were Thomas Addis Emmet, John H. Riker, and Rufus Prime.

Perhaps it would be hardly proper in this connection to speak of those venerable men as the Hell Gate colonists, but such they were indeed, attracted to this section of the Island of Manhattan by its marvellous and diversified beauties of land and water. They built their homes here, erected their family tombs, set the light of their church on a hill, and planned for the peaceful occupation of generations, little dreaming that before the century closed their homes would be swept away by a tidal wave of population, and their own bones torn out of the sod and trotted away to some crowded city of the dead.

There is but one New York. I have visited London at my leisure, and have made my home in Paris; have seen the tropical beauty of South American cities, and the Arctic glory of the old French towns in Canada; but I want to put it on record that there is only one New York, and that it is peerless. No other city possesses natural beauty to compare with it.

In an article written for the *Talisman* in 1828, Mr. Gulian C. Verplanck takes the ground that New York was even then one of the pivots of creation. "It is a sort of thoroughfare," he says, "a spot where almost every remarkable character is seen once in the course of his life, and almost every remarkable thing once in the course of its existence. Does anybody in that city want to see a friend living in Mexico, or Calcutta, or China, all that he has to do is to reside quietly in New York and he will be gratified. The object in search of which he might compass half the globe will present itself in his daily walk when he least expects it." With the exception of Mont Blanc, Westminster Abbey, and the Emperor of China, this is probably

ATLANTIC GARDEN, No. 9 BROADWAY

true. Here Jonathan Edwards, Whitefield, and the apostolic Tennant have preached, and Oglethorpe and Count Zinzendorf have exhorted; here Washington has dwelt in state, and Jefferson has kept his quiet house on Cedar Street; here Talleyrand has displayed his club-foot and his power to be sarcastic, even with children; here lived for a time Billaud de Varennes, who led the French mob at St. Antoine; and here Count Auguste Louis de Singeron, one of the gallant band of officers who defended the King on that August night when the Tuileries ran blood, sold cake and candies to the children; here King William IV., of England, disported himself as a midshipman, learning to skate on the Collect Pond, and King Louis Philippe, of France, taught school in the old Somerindyke mansion on upper Broadway; here Volney, Cobbett, Tom Moore, Murat, the Bonapartes, and heroes and acade-

micians enough to fill a volume with their achievements and set society by the ears have visited or dwelt in tents. The procession has been moving on ever since. I have seen the future King of England on our streets; slender, fiery Don Carlos; fierce Henri de Rochefort; the jovial but darksome "King of the Cannibal Islands," whose august name Kalakaua was turned into "Calico" by irreverent urchins; several exiled Haytian monarchs, more or less dark of aspect; General Paez, and a long succession of South American soldiers and rulers; and even his august autocracy, the Shah of Persia, has recently remarked in confidence that he would like to visit New York, and would do it but for the fear that his distinguished friends who hold the helm in Russia and England might take advantage of his absence to dismember his kingdom.

In a letter written by Washington Irving, from Paris, in 1824, to Henry Brevoort, he speaks of his intense delight at having received a visit from Dominick Lynch, and having a long chat over old times and old associates. They talked about New York until he became homesick. "I do not know," he says, "whether it is the force of early impressions and associations, but there is a charm about that little spot of earth, the beautiful city and its environs, that has a perfect spell over my imagination. The bay, the rivers and their wild and woody shores, the haunts of my boyhood on land and water, absolutely have a witchery over my mind." Then he rises to a climax which should be read in the hearing of American colonies abroad, and writes: "I thank God for having been born in such a beautiful place among such beautiful scenery; I am convinced that I owe a vast deal

of what is good and pleasant in my nature to the circumstance." I close my eyes, shut the book, and try to fancy Washington Irving, as I saw him in his honored old age, moving about these old-fashioned rooms. It is one of the legends of the house that in the earlier years of his fame he was many times a guest at the table of its hospitable owner, and that he knew the family well his letters attest. If I were the owner I would rather that the feet of Washington Irving had crossed my threshold than to have numbered among my visitors any or all of the great men I have mentioned.

To me the whole atmosphere of Hell Gate is redolent with the memory of Washington Irving. As boy and man I know that he walked under the trees that still remain by the side of the river, and here he dreamed and wrote of ancient Dutch voyagers, of hobgoblins and ghosts of pirates, and likewise of everything that was sweet and lovely in nature. When he wished to retire from the clamor and bustle of the City of New York, where fashion then had pushed its way far out into the purlieus of Bleecker and Great Jones streets, and was even dreaming of turning the wild waste at Fourteenth Street, that stretched irregularly between the Bloomingdale Road and the Bowery (as it was then known) into Union Square, he came up to the summer home of the elder John Jacob Astor, on Hell Gate, for rest from what he called the "irksome fagging of my pen," or for planning and writing new books, and, as in every place which he visited, he has left here the pleasant impress of his personality.

It was the fashion of his day to look upon Mr. Astor as a man whose only object of devotion in life

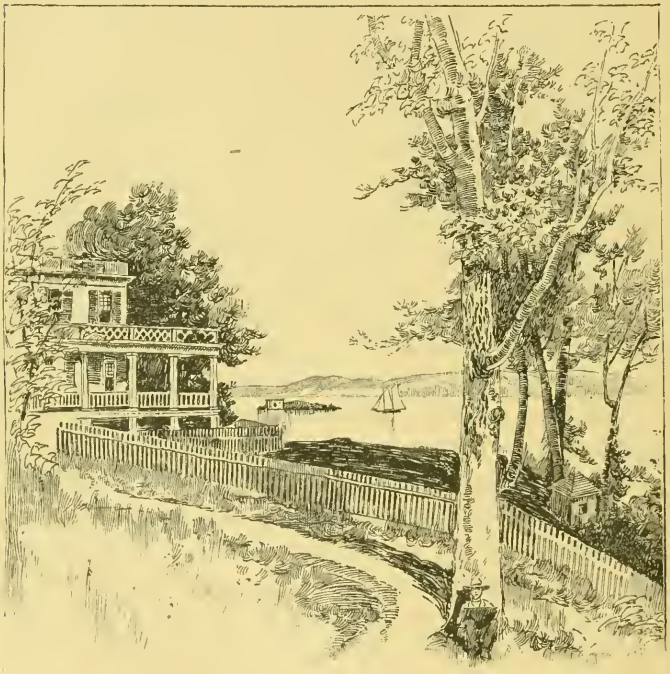
was the mighty dollar. He had amassed a fortune which was considered colossal, and there were many to envy him and to detract from his credit; many who chose to forget that had not John Jacob Astor and Stephen Girard come forward with their dollars to help the country in its last war with Great Britain, there would have been no powder for American cannon and no balls in American muskets. But most of all, I have honored Mr. Astor for the reason that Washington Irving esteemed him. It is a comparatively easy matter to bequeath a slice of one's fortune to found a public library, but a thousand times more difficult to acquire the friendship of such a man as Irving; and that the latter had a cordial admiration for the great merchant is evinced in many of his letters. It was because of the personal cordiality which existed between them that Irving found it so pleasant to be a guest for weeks at a time at his country-seat, as well as to be a frequent and familiar visitor at Mr. Astor's city home, which then stood on Broadway, upon the site of the present Astor House.

In a letter to his brother Peter, bearing date September 25, 1835, Washington Irving writes: "For upward of a month past I have been quartered at Hell Gate with Mr. Astor, and I have not had so quiet and delightful a nest since I have been in America. He has a spacious and well-built house, with a lawn in front of it and a garden in the rear. The lawn sweeps down to the water-edge, and full in front of the house is the little strait of Hell Gate, which forms a constantly moving picture." Here Mr. Astor kept what his guest calls "a kind of bachelor hall," the only other member of the family being his grandson, Charles

Astor Bristed, then a boy of fourteen, who afterwards inherited the place. Later, Mr. Irving goes on to say: "I cannot tell you how sweet and delightful I have found this retreat; pure air, agreeable scenery, a spacious house, profound quiet, and perfect command of my time and self. The consequence is that I have written more since I have been here than I have ever done in the same space of time." Two weeks later he writes to the same brother that he has "promised old Mr. Astor to return to his rural retreat at Hell Gate, and shall go out there to-day." In another letter, written on Christmas Day, he says that Mr. Astor does everything in his power to render his stay agreeable, "or rather, he takes the true way, by leaving us complete masters of ourselves and our time." The reason he uses the plural number is that his nephew, Pierre M. Irving, was with him, engaged under his supervision in digging out the material for his great work *Astoria*, which had been taken up at Mr. Astor's request and prepared in his Hell Gate mansion for publication. The early part of the next year, 1836, found Mr. Irving still hard at work in "that admirable place for literary occupation," Mr. Astor's "country retreat opposite Hell Gate," and there he was still busy in February, "giving my last handling to the Astor work. It is this handling which, like the touching and retouching of a picture, gives the richest effects." And it was while he was giving this exquisite setting to his rare and masterly pictures of wild life on the Pacific that the great American master of letters was from time to time a welcome visitor across this worn and faded threshold.

Other homes in the neighborhood made him wel-

come, as they had done before. During the War of 1812, in which, by-the-way, Washington Irving did service on the staff of Governor Tompkins, and earned the truly American title of colonel, which he made haste to drop, he was a guest at the rural home of the Lefferts, near the present Ninety-first Street and



THE GRACIE HOUSE

Third Avenue—a house which is still standing. In January, 1813, he writes: "Mr. Gracie has moved into his new house, and I find a very warm reception at the fireside. Their country-seat was one of my strong-

holds last summer, as I lived in its vicinity. It is a charming, warm-hearted family, and the old gentleman has the soul of a prince." Could praise go further? Yet it was deserved, I am sure. Archibald Gracie was one of New York's great merchants, and Oliver Wolcott said of him: "He was one of the excellent of the earth—actively liberal, intelligent, seeking and rejoicing in occasions to do good." Josiah Quincy, who was entertained by him at his country-seat on the East River, opposite Hell Gate, writes of the place as beautiful beyond description, and says: "The mansion is elegant, in the modern style, and the grounds laid out with taste in gardens." The house stood—and still stands in an excellent state of preservation—on the East River, at Horn's Hook (sometimes called Gracie's Point and Rhinelander's Point), at the foot of Eighty-ninth Street. It still looks out upon the whirling, foaming waters of Hell Gate; its lawn still stretches to the river; huge elms yet shade its ample porches, and it is a landmark yet to those who navigate the three channels of the Gate; but it long since passed into the hands of strangers, and its present possessors may not know or care what ghosts of footsteps—all unforgotten by fame or tradition — still linger regretfully about its halls.

I hear at the door the step of the old colonel, and I know he will drag me from my books to take what he calls the medicine of fresh air and sunshine. He asks me what I have been writing about, and when I have read him a page or two, he exclaims, with charming frankness, "Nonsense; why don't you tell of General Scott's dinner at the Gracie homestead, and of Commodore Chauncey's country-box just above here,

and put a little soldiering and fighting in your letters. I don't think much of steel-pens or goose-quills, either, for that matter. If I had sixteen sons I would put them all into the army — every one, sir — and make them fight for bread and their country. I would, by —by Nebuchadnezzar, sir!"

I thanked Nebuchadnezzar for coming in at this crisis and purring his approval of my visitor, but I could not resist the chance to fire a shot. As he sat down and took the cat in his lap and stroked its yellow coat, and did it gently with a touch that showed a tender and deep humanity in his heart, I said, "What a pity that your grandson should be a parson. I must warn Nellie against putting her trust in anything but a soldier!"

Nellie had entered the room without my seeing her, and, as she laid her hand upon his arm, her face was rosy and his was scarlet. He put the cat down gently, lifted a wrathful finger, and, with time only to exclaim, "Felix, I—" was conveyed away in safety by my daughter.

The cat and I had the laugh to ourselves. Nellie and the old colonel think that I know nothing about the young minister and her ladyship. I would like to question Nebuchadnezzar, as I think he knows more about it than I can guess.

CHAPTER IX

UNSOLVED PROBLEMS OF LIFE—THE OLD POST-ROAD AND ITS HELL GATE BRANCHES—HOMES OF MERCHANT PRINCES—MANHATTAN'S BIGGEST TREE

THE old colonel advises me to buy a tub and sun myself in it during these early days of autumn. He found me this morning a perplexed philosopher. I had been troubled by the unsolved problems of life. My opposite neighbor, name and nativity unknown, who lives in a shabby little frame-house, always runs to his door when he hears the sturdy step of Bob, the postman, turn the corner, and hails him as he passes with an inquiry for letters. Nobody thinks of writing to him. He has had but one letter this year, and yet he would as soon think of omitting his breakfast as of letting this ceremonial of inquiry pass. Why he does it is a problem which puzzles me. I put it to the postman, and he figured upon it thoughtfully for a moment and then gave it up; but he also gave it to me as a bit of his experience that the people on his route who seldom received a letter were always the most anxious to learn whether the mail had brought anything for them.

My cheery friend, the postman, found me sitting on the front porch, under the shade of the honeysuckles that threw a shadow on half the porch and have clambered up to the gallery on the roof, and singled out one missive of those that he handed me, and said,

"I have brought you a real letter, and no mistake, this time." It was even so. Four sheets of letter-paper, closely written, and from a friend who is the busiest man of my acquaintance, though his years are almost threescore and ten. It was a charming epistle, full of news, and pervaded by his own personality. But he also gave me a problem to solve. He had been able to take a vacation of but three weeks, and on his return it had taken him three weeks more to put his books and papers to rights again. Why is it so? he asked me; and then he made the assertion that if he had been absent for three months it would have been the work of three months afterwards to get everything settled down again, and he left me to puzzle over the problem. Rejecting the tub idea, the old colonel and I took our chairs out upon the back porch, with the swift waters leaping and sparkling at our feet, twenty feet below the top of the bluff, and a late cat-bird calling in the branches overhead, and talked over the fact that we had learned so much and knew so little. We spoke, as we so often do now, of our childhood, of our school-days, and our playmates; thinking silently as we spoke, perhaps, of another childhood, a school yet to come, and renewed companionships that had been broken in the past. Our talk recalled a picture of the past that had become almost forgotten.

It was of my grandmother — the picture in my library of a dainty maiden in clinging robes and baby waist, and with great sunny curls heaped high above her unwrinkled forehead, is her portrait painted in the day of her belleship — in the later years of her life, when her cap was her care and her knitting was her comfort. "Felix," she said, one day, as she stopped

HELL GATE FERRY

knitting to smooth down the long lace lappets of her cap, "I have been thinking while you were at school how little we learn here in threescore years, and yet when we are children we expect to learn everything by the time we are grown up. But we'll know it all by-and-by, that's one comfort, and for a little while it doesn't signify."

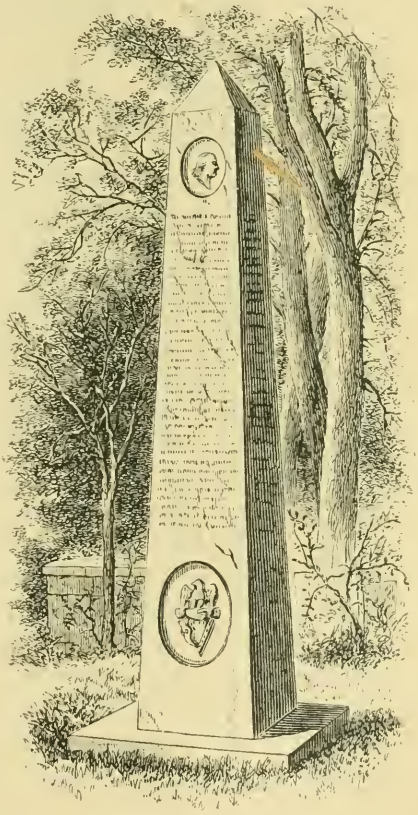
It was in the days when young ladies were habited as my grandmother's portrait presents them, and gentlemen of fashion wore the collars of their coats tucked up under their ears and swathed their necks in voluminous silk or muslin neckerchiefs, when among the elders the queue was going slowly out of fashion, and knee-breeches struggled to hold their own against the more democratic trousers, that the glory of the Hell Gate colony was at its height. The members had their stately homes in the city, to and from which they travelled in the chaise, or lumbering coach of the period, or, as the gentlemen usually preferred, on horseback.

At the time of which I write the Hell Gate Ferry was at the foot of Eighty-sixth Street, opposite the extreme northern end of Blackwell's Island, and there was a road to it that started from a point just south of Eighty-third Street. Below this, at Seventy-ninth Street and Third Avenue, was what was known as Odellville in my boyhood. It answered to the definition of a point, being without position or magnitude. West of the road was Odell's grocery store—a two-story frame building, which yet stands, though humbled by its brick and stone neighbors. The cottage of "Granny" Gates, a niece of Gen. Horatio Gates, 200 feet distant, and on the other side of the post-road

which here passes between Second and Third avenues, has been swept away; but Pye's Folly, a row of brick houses erected thirty years before this time, which proved a ruinous investment, has survived its projector, though it has grown aged and shabby of aspect. Connected with the main roadway to the ferry were a number of branch roads, mostly shaded by rows of trees, among which the Lombardy poplar was popular, which led to the country-seats of the gentlemen who always spoke of their places as being on Hell Gate. Commodore Chauncey's villa was south of Eighty-fifth Street, and between Avenues A and B; John Jacob Astor's on the south side of Eighty-eighth Street, his farm extending between Avenues A and B and Eighty-seventh and Eighty-ninth streets; Archibald Gracie's house was east of Avenue B, and north of Eighty-eighth Street; Nathaniel Prime's comfortable homestead lay north of Eighty-ninth Street, and west of Avenue A; and the farm-house of William Rhinelander stood north of Ninety-first Street, overlooking the bay, which then swept far in shore from Horn's Hook, and looking out upon Mill Rock and the Frying Pan.

Two of these houses yet remain, and yesterday I made a pilgrimage to their thresholds, and then sought the sites of those others which had been swept to destruction by the tidal wave of improvement. The besom of the speculator is implacable. In a few weeks the old house in which I live will be torn down, and modern bricks fashioned into a tenement-house will replace it. When I went into Riverside Park yesterday one of its guardians told me that the old brick mansion which stands in its enclosure, note-

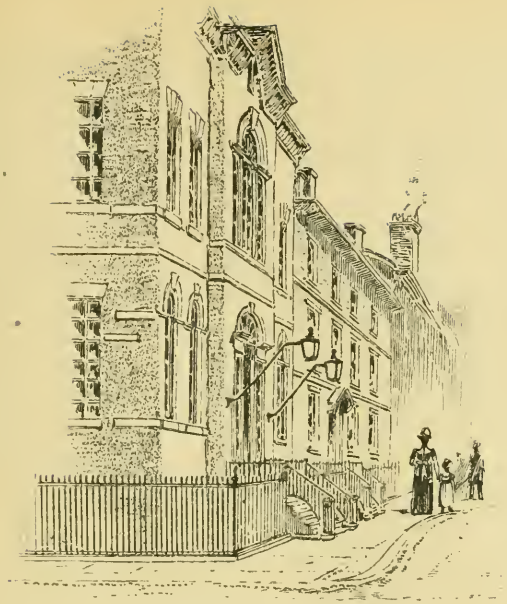
worthy for its great hall ending in an entrance-door at either side, is doomed. Thomas Addis Emmet used to spend his summers here, and with Washington Irving was a frequent guest at the house of Archibald Gracie, where not infrequently fifty guests sat down to dinner. The site of John Jacob Astor's home is desolate. A few aged and half-withered trees, some grassy mounds and straggling bushes, give token that the place was once inhabited, but that is all. It is a pity, too. The house—I have a picture of it before me—is a square frame building, with an extension in the rear. The great door of the hall had a window of corresponding size above it, and two windows on either side. The wide, low porch was supported by four pillars, which



MONUMENT TO THOMAS ADDIS EMMET

reached to the roof, and the latter, peaked at the centre, had a single dormer-window in front. The lawn is open in front towards the water, but on either side, and at the rear, are trees of various kinds—evergreens, beeches, and elms. There is no pretension about the house or lands, neither the display of the landscape-gardener or the architect, but the house looks like a fitting nest for the man who dreamed *Astoria* and penned it. The fact is that the gentlemen of high-collared coats built for comfort and hospitality. Two blocks away is the country home of Nathaniel Prime, the great banker of the firm of Prime, Ward & Sands, who married a daughter of Comfort Sands, and when in town lived in state at No. 1 Broadway. His country-seat, which faces to the north-east, looking across Hell Gate and up the East River, is a model of a suburban homestead. Its broad porches at the front, side, and rear were made to shelter its great hall and wide rooms from the sun and the winds. The house, which is two stories in height, but is made massive in appearance by its abutting wings, is in an excellent state of preservation, and is now one of the buildings occupied by St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum. Yesterday, as I passed, a score of merry lads were running across the lawn, which stands high above the grade of the street, shouting at their play. As I walked slowly up the street and looked back at the peak of the roof, marking the old-fashioned arched window in the centre of the garret and the quarter windows on either side, I could have wished myself an orphan under its shelter—if only they would let me bring my pipe, two of the cats, and The Boy!

Though the rural homestead of Archibald Gracie



1 AND 3 BROADWAY IN 1828

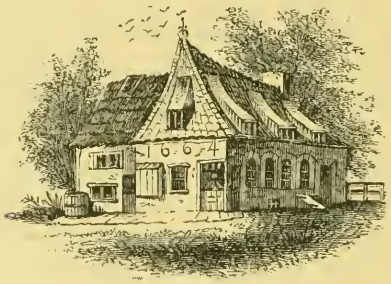
still stands in much of its primitive strength and comeliness, it may disappear at any time. The firm of Archibald Gracie & Co. exists as it did a hundred years ago, but the house in which Louis Philippe, John Quincy Adams, Tom Moore, and Washington Irving were guests of its founder long since passed into other hands. Its surroundings are not attractive, and a high board fence is an unpleasant feature, but its grounds are still so spacious, and the memories of those who were sheltered under its roof are yet so tangible, that it is worth a walk on foot from the Battery to Horn's Hook to view it in the golden haze of these autumnal days and hang the picture up in memory's gallery. Beautiful for situation, it stands on a

cape that juts out into the river, and its windows command a view of Hell Gate and its rocks, the islands in the upper channel, Long Island's wooded shores, the forests that hang above Oak Point, the growing, throbbing streets of Harlem; a hundred flashing craft are spread before the eye, and nearer at hand is a lawn that yet has the look of velvet, in which seven great trees and a score of lesser ones stand sentinel. Supreme among the group, a monarch no less by right of his majestic growth than because of his two centuries of years, towers a mighty cotton-wood, which measures fourteen feet in circumference at the height of thirty-six inches from the ground, and lifts itself up fifty feet from the earth before it sends out its branches. Its enormous dome, symmetrical and beautiful, makes a landmark which every man who sails the waters of the East River would miss and mourn if storm uprooted it or axe were laid at its root. The house—large, roomy, fenced round with wide porches that take away from its size rather than add to it—looks as if it might readily accommodate a hundred guests, and were prepared to-day to welcome them. Eighty years ago it was the home of an American prince, whose fleet of clippers with their red and white signals was known in every sea—only a merchant, but hospitable as a king. It seems strange to read in a city newspaper of 1809, published when Mobile was a Spanish settlement, and there was but one steamboat in all the world, and fashionable New York dined at three o'clock, the announcement that Archibald Gracie, of Mobile, has taken into partnership his son Archibald, and that the business will be conducted under their joint names.

In the son's veins, through his maternal ancestry, mingled the blood of the last colonial Governor of Connecticut, and of Matthew Rogers, who owned and occupied the unique building at No. 8 State Street, facing the Battery.

I sit here thinking of those trees on historic Horn's Hook—trees which stood there when, in 1760, Jacob Walton, a colonial merchant prince, brought hither to his elegant country-seat his fair young bride, Polly Cruger, daughter of Henry Cruger, the colleague of Burke as Member of Parliament from Bristol; when, fifteen years later, Gen. Charles Lee ordered the house to be vacated, and made it his own headquarters; when, a year later, the British moved up the Long Island shore to Hallett's Point, after the disastrous battle on Brooklyn Heights, and opened a heavy artillery fire upon the American works and garrison at Horn's Hook, and which have witnessed all the changes since. How long have these mute witnesses of the country's glory and the city's growth to live? It was unpardonable stupidity that did not seize this choicest of all points on the East River for a public park; it will be the height of cruelty to slay these surviving monarchs of the primeval woods that once covered this part of the Island of Manhattan! Who will dare wield the axe to kill this king of all our trees —the last of the giant cotton-woods? In answer to this question comes a memory of the first school that I attended, when but a mite of a boy. The teacher was scholarly, but eccentric. He should have been a college professor, but was such a child himself that he taught a primary school. One of the larger boys had cut into and partly girdled a maple in front of the

school-house, and how the boy did catch it! The single sentence of reproof has always remained with me: "The boy that would injure a shade-tree would kill a man." I used to make light of the old pedagogue's verdict; now I am afraid that I believe it. The old colonel, into whose protecting lap Martha Washington has climbed, vows that he will slay with his own hand the wretch who dares thrust his steel into the great Gracie tree.



A DUTCH HOUSE

CHAPTER X

A GLANCE AT HARLEM—THE LESSON OF THE WOODPECKER—A GREAT MILL-POND THAT HAS DISAPPEARED—THE OTTER TRACK AND BENSON'S CREEK—GRIST-MILLS ON THIRD AVENUE—OLD DUTCH HOMES AND NAMES

THERE was a woodpecker at work on the big cherry-tree this morning. For an hour he hammered away, with an industry which ought to have brought him a good breakfast. His figure flashed from one side of the trunk to the other with such rapidity that we watched with wonder to see where the silver fretting of his wings and the sheen of his glossy black back would next show themselves. A busy little fellow he, who paid no attention to the idle crew that gazed at him in delight, but thrust his bill into worm-holes with an accuracy that never made a mistake. It was my daughter Nellie who descried him first. She took me by the button-hole as I pushed my chair back from the breakfast-table, marched me out on the porch, and, pointing to the woodpecker, bade me behold my prototype. "See," she said, "how he delves into dark places and digs out their hidden treasures, happy when he has brought to light the secrets that are hidden there." I pleaded guilty, with a smile, and took off my hat to the speckled delver.

Yes, mine has been the life of the little bird this summer, and I am loath to leave my ancient homestead and pause from its antiquarian studies. An-

other year and the house that has known fourscore years of the joys and sorrows of life will be levelled to the ground, the axe will be hurled against the heart of these old trees, my garden will disappear, and on the real estate map of the city a red parallelogram will take the place of the yellow one of to-day, to denote to the inquirer that a row of brick tenements occupies the site of the quaint old frame-house by the river. So I linger, while it is yet possible and while the golden glory of these autumnal days makes life under the scarlet leaves of tree and vine a luxury, over the landscape whose forgotten beauties still exist for me. I trace out the brooks and ponds, headlands and meadows, country-seats and farm-houses, hills and bits of forest of the olden time, and for the moment they are real. I call up the sturdy old Dutch farmer in voluminous waistcoats and leathern breeches, the bewigged and belaced English colonist who brought with him the roystering ways of the mother-country, and made the valley of the Harlem resound with the cry of the fox-hunt; the soldiers in the scarlet of the King and the patriot battalions in buff and blue; the merchant princes and jurists and men of leisure, whose country residences once crowned every hillock in view; the mill-pond and creek in the distance; the little rural village, and its whitewashed church surmounted by a gilded weathercock; the stage-coach, horse-ferry, and rustic tavern—all these are hammered out by the bill of the literary woodpecker. It is not much in the eyes of a financier, perhaps, but then he would not think much of the busy little bird either, and the latter, though not so large as the hawk or a buzzard, is as merry as the day is long. What more

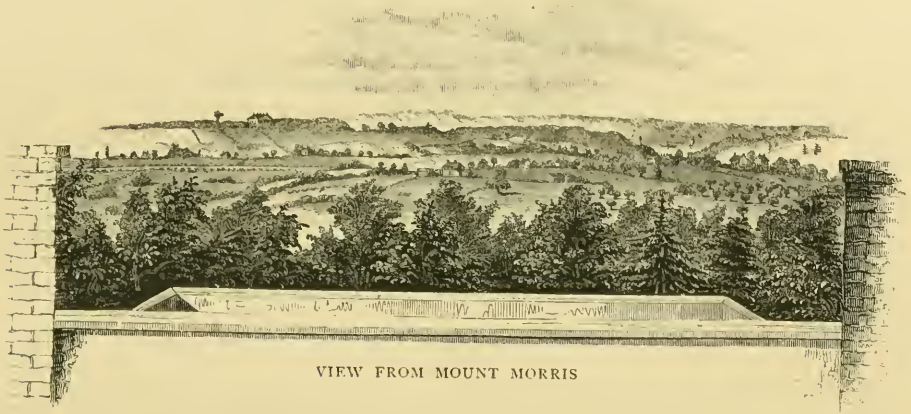
could he ask? He has his wings and his twig, and he finds his worm when he wants it. For anything beyond, he is wise enough not to bother his head.

It is always worth while to go to the bottom of a hole and find the nugget that lies there. I have been looking up the meaning of the old Dutch designation "hook," which occurs so frequently on the ancient maps of the Island of Manhattan, and which yet survives in Tubby Hook on the North River. That profound work, entitled the *Goot Woordenboeck*, published at Rotterdam in 1658, says that the word "hoeck," or "hook," signifies a nook, a corner, or an angle. The ancient maps of the Hell Gate district locate Hoorn's Hook at the foot of Eighty-ninth Street, and Van Kenlen's Hook at the southern bank and outlet of the Harlem River. The latter took its name from the family who pre-empted and occupied the 200 acres south of the Harlem and extending to Fifth Avenue. Although a landed proprietor by the name of Horn purchased a portion of the property in the neighborhood of Eighty-ninth Street, the locality did not derive its title from him, but, like New Amsterdam and New Haarlem, it was baptized in memory of Hoorn in Holland, where Siebert Claesen, a wealthy burgher of New Amsterdam in the days of Governor Peter Stuyvesant, had passed many pleasant days, and whose fragrant memory he desired to perpetuate.

As early as 1636 the pioneers of Dutch civilization made their appearance in the fertile plains at the foot of the rocky height to which they gave the name of Slang Berge, or Snake Hill, now called Mount Morris. There had been an Indian village at this point, and the Indians had given to the land the musical name

Muscoota, signifying the flats or meadows, and the river was designated by the same title. Isaac de Rasieres, who was secretary of the Dutch West India Company in 1628, gives the first written description of the locality, and says that while towards Hell Gate and to the westward it was rocky and full of trees, towards the north end it had good bottom-lands. The mind of the Hollander was instinctively drawn to what the early colonists called the flats of the Island of Manhattan, and the region was all the more attractive because it was bordered by salt meadows traversed at many points by creeks and kills. Under the shadow of Snake Hill they laid out a village. Its present spires and shipping, its railways and colossal structures of brick and stone, form part of the landscape from my windows, but they do not obliterate the woods and fields, the old Dutch homesteads and farm-houses, the streams and inlets now vanished but upon which my eyes looked more than forty years ago, and whose remembrance is as vivid as the city home of my childhood.

When the present plan of city streets was adopted, eighty years since, the eastern post-road, which diverged from the present Third Avenue at Eighty-third Street and crossed Fourth Avenue at Eighty-fifth Street, passed the corner of Observatory Place and intersected the Middle Road at Ninetieth Street. Observatory Place was intended as a square for a reservoir, and extended from Eighty-ninth to Ninety-fourth Street, and from Fifth to Sixth Avenue. The road then passed in a northerly direction between the latter avenues, and crossed a small bridge over the head of Benson's tide mill-pond, near One Hundred



VIEW FROM MOUNT MORRIS

and Fifth Street and Fifth Avenue, and thence swept a little west of Third Avenue, through the village of Harlem, which was located between One Hundred and Sixteenth and One Hundred and Twenty-fifth streets, and so on to the Harlem River. From Ninety-second Street there was a road which crossed over to Kingsbridge Road, striking it a little to the west of the present Eighth Avenue at Myer's Corner, about One Hundred and Thirty-first Street. Another lane, called the Harlem Road, passed from the village over the Harlem flat to the north of Snake Hill, and made a junction with the Kingsbridge Road at Myer's Corner. These roads were all laid out in the seventeenth century, at which time also the diverging road to Hoorn's Hook was cut through the woods that then lined the banks of the river. The land must have been exceedingly fair to look upon then, for Governor Wouter Van Twiller, who had laid hands upon the Island of Tenkeins opposite, now known as Ward's Island, to appropriate it, as early as 1633 pre-empted all the lands bordering on Hell Gate Bay which had obtained the name of Otter-spoor or otter track, from the number of otters with which it abounded.

Through this tract swept a creek which was 100 feet wide at its mouth and 20 feet deep, and was navigable for half a mile or more inland. It emptied into Hell Gate Bay near One Hundred and Seventh Street, thence stretching westwardly up and beyond Fifth Avenue, one of its sources being in Central Park, and the other, a rippling brook, fed by crystal springs that nestled at the foot of the rocks in Morningside Park. The spring in Central Park was known as "Montanye's fonteyn," and still exists in its perennial freshness.

The curious wayfarer might find it in its original basin on the line of One Hundred and Fifth Street and to the west of the Sixth Avenue line, but the basin has been covered up, and a hidden pipe leads the waters to the foot of the hill where, in a "hook" or angle of the rocks, it bubbles forth as merrily as of old, and leaps along its ancient bed until it falls into the waters of Harlem Lake. Originally known as Montanye's, the next century gave the name Benson's Creek to this stream, and on later maps it appeared as Harlem Creek until obliterated by the march of the spade and the hod.

The Dutch had hardly begun to farm the fertile glebe of Harlem before one of their number saw the advantages of the stream, and proposed to the good burghers to help him in building a bridge. But they deliberated long, and doubtless smoked up several hogsheads of tobacco before they could see their way clearly to such a venture. At last they seemed to have organized a sort of trust, or "combine," in the line of public improvements. Not to do things by halves, they determined that Harlem should have a grist-mill, a tavern, and a ferry, and they proceeded to put the enterprise in operation. The dam for the mill was built in 1667. It crossed the creek a little to the west of Third Avenue at One Hundred and Ninth Street, and at its northern end stood the grist-mill. There was a stone bridge at Third Avenue, and another crossed Mill Creek at One Hundred and Eleventh Street and Fifth Avenue, the mill-pond extending this distance back and giving its name to the principal brook that fed it. In 1730 Derick Benson became owner of the property, having removed hither

from Greenwich Village — the Bassen Bouwery of old Dutch days, where dwelt the Mandevilles, Van Schaicks, Woertendykes, and Somerindykes of Holland ancestry. For some years the mill had fallen into disuse, and in October, 1738, the town granted permission to Samson Benson, his brother, to erect a mill with a dam and dwelling-house.

COURTNEY'S (CLAREMONT) FROM HARLEM TOWER

During the War of the Revolution these buildings, which were occupied by the military, who had a fortification at Benson's Point (the southern bank of the creek, known later as Rhinelander's Point), were burned to the ground. After the war was ended Benjamin Benson built a new mill and a substantial stone dwelling on the Mill Camp farm, as it was then called. In 1827, when the Harlem Canal was begun,

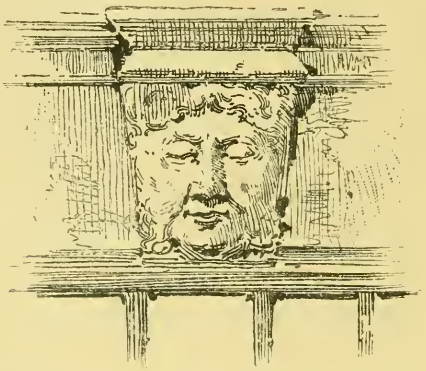
that speculative enterprise, gigantic for those days, which was to unite the waters of the Hudson and East rivers by a navigable canal from Benson's Point to Harlem Cove, now Manhattanville, the mill, a frame building three stories in height, was taken down, but the dwelling-house was spared until 1865. I well remember the canal, with its stone embankments and locks, which was extended beyond Fourth Avenue before it was abandoned; and, indeed, the man of forty can recall it, and picture to himself how oddly appeared this bit of costly enterprise that crossed desolate marshes and barren wastes of ground. It has disappeared now, and a busy city covers up all trace of canal and marsh. The stranger would never dream that the snipe had so recently teetered on the site of yonder tall houses, and that it was only the whistle of the elevated train that finally drowned his cry. But there are old men who remember the quiet mill-pond and its overhanging willows, the dusty roadway lined with beeches and elms, the stone bridge and the salt-marshes on either side, and out towards Hell Gate Bay and Horn's Hook the beautiful country-seats which diversified the landscape of river, rapids, meadows, and islands.

On either side of Benson's Creek, in the time of which I write, were stately country-seats which faced the mouth of the stream, and whose lawns stretched down to its waters. One of these, the Bayard house, still stands on One Hundred and Tenth Street, between First and Second avenues. It is almost hidden by gigantic gas-tanks at the front and rear. Yet it still looks towards the stream that is no more, and has strangely outlived it. Now, after nearly a century of

life, it retains much of its old look, and its chimneys at either end, its shingled roof, wide porch, and the broken slant of its galleried roof, proclaim its antiquity. Lifted high above the street, something of its once magnificent lawn is still left, and a cotton-wood and elm, each seemingly older than the house they guard, stand on either side as mute witnesses to a splendor that has been lost forever.

I do not know what name, if any, this ancient mansion bore in the days of its glory, but there were some names emblazoned on the old Dutch homes of Harlem that deserve to be rescued from oblivion. One would not suspect the Holland tradesmen and navigators of a tendency to poetry, yet these sterling old souls had it in their hearts, if not on their tongues. They may have cheated the Indians, sworn at the Yankees, and drunk heavily of schnapps on the Strand, but when they came back to their boweries the spirit of home brooded under their ample vests. Zegendal, "the vale of blessing," was the name one sturdy settler in Harlem bestowed upon the homestead he had made, and another called his glebe Vredendal, "the vale of repose," or quiet. It is a pity that some of these names could not have been preserved; a greater pity still that the old Indian names which the aborigines of the Island of Manhattan bequeathed us have almost passed into oblivion. No one remembers that the Harlem River was called the Muscoota; Tibbett's Brook is usurping the name Mosholu; Spuyten Duyvil has superseded Schorakapok, or Spouting Spring, and the land around Hell Gate Bay no longer recalls its Indian designation, Conykeekst—the home of the rabbit. Through the haze of these autumnal

days I look out upon fields on the farther shore in which the shocks of corn stand like wigwams of the red man. The corn will be gathered to-morrow, and the winds from the north will sweep away the golden mists of to-day. I am very sorry for the Indian, but, really, this beautiful island is a little too good for him, even were he all that Fenimore Cooper has painted him.



HEAD OVER WINDOW OF THE WALTON HOUSE

CHAPTER XI

RAMBLES AROUND HARLEM — IN MY SCHOOL-BOY DAYS — EARLY SETTLERS AND THEIR HOMES—AN INTERIOR VIEW—THE STAGE-COACH ERA—A VILLAGE ALDERMAN OF THE OLDEN TIME

"FOR what is the City of Haarlem famous?"

"For its great organ—the largest in the world."

These words were certainly not spoken. They came back to me from the mists of half a century ago, and were the echo of my thoughts. Master Felix and I were sitting in the library. He was studying his geography lesson, and I was reading about the pioneers who established a "Nieuw Haarlem" on the flats of Manhattan. There may have been an unseen connection between these two facts, but I maintain that no sound was audible. The echoed question and answer brought before me a little urchin in roundabout and trousers, with a ruffle around his neck, standing with his class in a room which occupied the entire front of the second story in a little brick house on Franklin Street. Desks for a score of boys were strung closely together against the front and sides of the room. At the rear was a mahogany table, behind which sat the teacher in his arm-chair. On the table were books, bunches of quill-pens, and sand-boxes—for the steel-pen was an object of prejudice and blotting-paper was unknown—together with forfeited apples, cakes, fly-boxes constructed of paper, balls, and mar-

bles, and certain flat rulers and rounded rattans, which were used interchangeably, according as discipline was administered to the palm of the hand or other more robust portions of the juvenile anatomy. In those days there was no revised version of the Scriptures, and our teacher, who was a son of the granite hills of New Hampshire, and likewise superintendent of the Sunday-school attached to the Presbyterian Church on Murray Street, was a devout believer in King Solomon's advice about sparing the rod and spoiling the child.

It is a pleasure to note the love for their city which lies in the hearts of the old sons of New York, and which seems not only to survive many other emotions, but to grow deeper with advancing years. More letters with a word of sympathy in his pursuits have come to Felix Oldboy than he has had time to acknowledge, and most grateful among these have been kindly messages from some of my old school-fellows. The latest of these came from the Union Club, written by a gentleman of scholarly tastes and civic eminence, whom every New Yorker would recognize were I to write his name, in which he says: "I entered the school of J. J. Greenough, as a student, in May, 1839, more than fifty years ago, then at No. 399 Greenwich Street, near Jay, on the east side of the street, and remained three years, when I entered the university grammar-school. In May, 1840, Mr. Greenough removed his school to No. 18 Walker Street, and the next year to Franklin Street. Of those who were students at the school during my term I know of only three living: George C. Wetmore, Theodore Wetmore, and George De Forest Lord. I have many

THE ROTUNDA, CITY HALL PARK.

pleasant recollections of those school-days, it being the first boys' school that I attended. I saw much of Mr. Greenough after I left his school; he always felt very kindly towards me, and on my departure presented me with a recommendation to a new school, handsomely engrossed, which I have preserved. He also gave me his portrait in oil, taken many years before, which I now have. This I looked at this morning to refresh my memory of the old days." It is a pleasure to read such a letter. As I hold it in my hand and look back to the past, the rod of which I stood in awe changes into an olive-branch in the hand of my ancient teacher, and his shade smiles as pleasantly upon me as if I had never gleefully plotted his discomfiture.

But, with the garrulousness of a seventeenth-century preacher, whom I shall presently have need to quote, I am wandering from my text. Harlem was always to me, in my younger days, the land of delightful mystery, the *ultima thule* of the Island of Manhattan, a region of hill-side and forest, of rocky defiles and marshy meadows, of brooks, in whose head waters the sunfish and perch abounded and at whose mouths the succulent flounder could be caught, of pleasant shade under the cotton-wood, oak, and tulip trees, of buttercups, daisies, and gentians, of farm and village life as contrasted with city roar and rumble. A picnic in this region was the acme of school-boy pleasure, especially if it included a trip on the railroad, which slowly crept through the deep passes cut through the rocks at Yorkville, stopping at Harsen's cross-road and at the middle road to drop its passengers, and landing, finally, after what seemed a long

ride, at lonely Harlem. The nineteenth century has not gone out without witnessing vestibule trains, with modern hotel accommodations on wheels; but this luxury of travel will never bring me the same amount of pleasure that I used to extract from the barracks on wheels of forty years ago, the horse-hair seats, narrow windows with small panes of glass, and flat, unventilated roofs. Uncomfortable though they were, they were to me as the enchanted carpet of the *Arabian Nights*, and no similar amount of enjoyment could be purchased elsewhere for a shilling.

History represents the early Dutch settlers as a phlegmatic race who had always an eye to the main chance, but I shall never hesitate to express the opinion that they had also an eye to the beautiful, even if poetry was made secondary to pelf. It must also be remembered that many of the men who first came to New Amsterdam were Huguenot refugees, who had kept up, during their temporary exile in the lowlands of Holland, a vivid remembrance of the mountains and meadows of *la belle France*. The pioneer settler in Harlem, Henri De Forest—who dwelt but one short year in the home he had built under the shadow of Snake Hill, and then was called to enter the house not made with hands—was a native of France, and of the reformed faith, and several of his colleagues had the same ancestry. I do not wonder at their enthusiasm for the place they selected for their new colony. If they climbed Snake Hill and looked abroad, I do not wonder that they were enchanted with the prospect. Three rivers glanced in the sunshine before them; mountain, forest, and plain were parted by small ponds and innumerable brooks, and at their

feet, sheltered by two ranges of hills from the blasts of the north-westerly winds, lay a rich alluvial belt that promised a hundred-fold return to their labor as husbandmen. They felt that it was good to be there; and building better than they knew, they hewed out the rafters that were to be the foundations of the magnificent new city of to-day that covers the sites of their farms of the olden time.

Yesterday I climbed Mount Morris, and changed as the scene has become by the improvements which in two centuries have blotted out much of the ancient loveliness of the landscape, I felt like challenging any other city in the world to produce its equal. There sparkled the East River and Hell Gate, with their setting of emerald islands and wooded banks; there the waters of the Harlem, spanned by aqueduct and bridge, wound along until they seemed to sink into the base of the distant, purple Palisades; there again rose the wooded heights of Fordham on one side and of Inwood and Fort Washington on the other; and the rocky ramparts of Morningside Park, with the teeming city below, while the hills and trees and meadows of Central Park broke the monotony of bricks and mortar and made a pleasant resting-place for the eye. All around me, at my feet, rose the magnificent public buildings and homes of a city that had grown up in a decade—built as by the magic of a day—the city of Nieuw Haarlem; indeed, but a city of which the timid projectors of the village on the flats never dreamed. Yet let us not be surprised that they did not dream of it, when the man who projected and built the Erie Canal—De Witt Clinton, New York's greatest mayor—deemed it an improbability that the land at this

end of the Island of Manhattan could be built up in city fashion during the present century.

The garrulous preacher of the seventeenth century, to whom reference has been made, was a schismatic of the Labadist persuasion, who, like other fanatics, believed that all the salt of the earth was confined to his mite of a sect. He made one of his visits to Haarlem in the October days of 1679, and he describes the Dutch minister, who sometimes preached there, and whom he did not fellowship in doctrine, as "a thick, corpulent person, with a red, bloated face, and of a very slabbering speech." If we are to credit this apostle of heresy, the people of the village spent much of their time in drinking rum and carousing; but even this narrow-minded man could not help being impressed by the natural beauty of his surroundings. "A little eastward of Nieuw Haarlem," he writes in his journal, "there are two ridges of very high rocks, with a considerable space between them, displaying themselves very majestically, and inviting all men to acknowledge in them the majesty, grandeur, power, and glory of the Creator, who has impressed such marks upon them." And he rounds off his description with the assertion that the grapes were as good as any he had tasted "in the Fatherland," and that "the peaches were the best he had ever eaten."

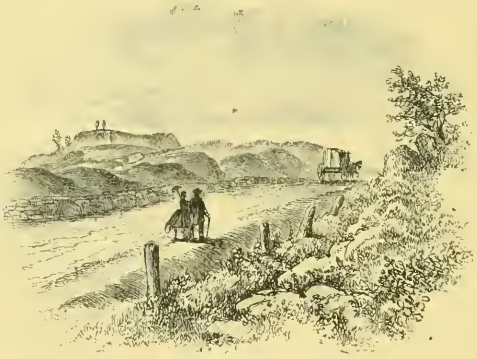
A later traveller, writing a quarter of a century afterwards, gives us a glimpse of the interior of one of the homes of Harlem, and, being a woman, her eyes observe narrowly. "The inside of them" (meaning the houses), she writes, "are neat to admiration; the wooden work, for only the walls are plastered and

the sumers [the central beam] and gist [joist] are plained and kept very white scowr'd, as so is all the partitions made of Bord. The fireplaces have no Jambs, as ours have, but the backs run flush with the walls, and the Hearth is of Tyles and is as farr out into the Room at the Ends as before the fire, which is generally Five foot in the lower rooms; and the piece over where the mantle tree should be is made as ours with Joyner's work and, as I suppose, is fastened to the iron rodds inside. The House where the Vendue was had Chimney Corners like ours, and they and the Hearth were laid with the finest tile that I ever see, and the staircases laid with white tile, which is ever clean and so are the walls of the Kitchen which had a Brick floor." The tiles in the staircase were set into the wall, forming a continuous border to the upper line of the stairs, as can still be seen in some of the old Dutch houses in the interior, and notably in the old Coeyman homestead on the bank of the upper Hudson.

I have said that the growth of New York has far outstripped even the most sanguine expectations of De Witt Clinton, and I read this in the report made by the commissioners he appointed to lay out the streets and roads of the city under the act of 1807—Gouverneur Morris, Simeon De Witt, and John Rutherford. In laying out the streets they made provision for a parade-ground for the militia, to extend from Twenty-third to Thirty-fourth Street, and from Third to Seventh Avenue, as well as for other smaller parks;*

*It was at the suggestion of Hon. James Harper, when Mayor of New York, and under his influence, that Madison Square was laid out as it now exists.—L.

and in their report to Mayor Clinton, in 1809, they apologize for doing so, and add: "It may be a subject of merriment that the commissioners have provided space for a greater population than is gathered at any spot this side of China. They have, in this respect, been governed by the shape of the ground. It is not improbable that considerable numbers may be collected at Harlem before the high hills to the southward of it shall be built upon as a city; and it is improbable that, *for centuries to come*, the grounds north of Harlem flat will be covered with houses. To have come short of the extent laid out might therefore have defeated just expectations; and to have gone further might have furnished material to the perni-



McGOWAN'S PASS IN 1860

cious spirit of speculation." The ghosts of the highly respected citizens who penned these words must be mightily dumfounded at the city that stretches up from the Battery to the Harlem River, leaps across that

stream on wings of steam, and is rapidly striding towards the classic Bronx.

As designed by Mr. John Randel, the city surveyor under Clinton, Harlem was to have two parks. One of these, Harlem Square, was laid out between One Hundred and Seventeenth and One Hundred and Twenty-first streets and Sixth and Seventh avenues, on the common lands of the city. The other, to be known as Harlem Marsh Square, was laid out on the commissioners' plan from One Hundred and Sixth to One Hundred and Ninth Street, and from Fifth Avenue to the East River at Benson's Point. It contained nearly seventy acres, and until the canal at this point was projected, was considered the best and most healthful means of disposing of Harlem Creek and its adjacent marshes, whenever the growth of the village should demand the obliteration of the mill-dam and stream. And hereabouts, I must not omit to say, was the home of the McGowns, who gave their name (written in history as McGowan) to the famous rocky pass, still traceable in the upper part of Central Park, through which the troops of Washington sent the redcoats flying at the battle of Harlem Plains. Mr. Andrew McGown, the famous old Harlem Democrat, father of Judge A J McGown, was fond of sailing on the waters of the East River, and kept his yacht at his residence, which stood at the foot of One Hundred and Ninth Street. He had a canal cut through the marshes to the foot of his lawn, to enable him to have his yacht brought up close to the house, and it remained open until quite recently, when it had to be filled in to sustain the onward march of improvement. The McGown family originally came from Scotland,

WORKS AT McGOWAN'S PASS, WAR OF 1812

and settled in Harlem a number of generations ago. In the days of '76 Daniel McGown, father of Andrew McGown, resided at the homestead in McGown's Pass, about where Mount St. Vincent Hotel now is—at One Hundred and Sixth Street and Sixth Avenue. After the gallant action on Harlem Plains, where the Americans for two days successively drove back the British troops, sending them whirling below Yorkville, Lord Howe moved up his entire army from the city to retrieve the disaster. The advance-guard was the Hessian brigade. They stopped at the McGown homestead, and found that the only male person at home was this child of twelve years—Andrew McGown—whose father was in Washington's army. The boy was pressed into service to guide the column of mercenaries against the American camp. Quick-witted and patriotic, he gave no sign that he was other than pleased, but he led the Hessians a merry dance over

hill and marsh and meadow, down to the North River, near the present Riverside Park, while the American forces were leisurely taking themselves out of the way and camping behind their intrenchments at Fort Washington. A boy that day was the salvation of his country.

It was by such a spirit as this little lad's that independence was achieved and the corner-stone of the country's prosperity was laid. We need a little more of it in these days of Irish-American, German-American, and other un-American mixtures, when it is made a political crime to call one's self an American simply, or to act or vote as such, and when an eloquent imported preacher proclaims that there are no Americans except the Indians. The boys and the men who fought in the Revolution were the fathers of the race, and the women who suffered in their absence, and sustained these heroes by their patriotism, were the mothers. When they are forgotten, or when we cease to honor them, it will be near the hour of sunset in our land.

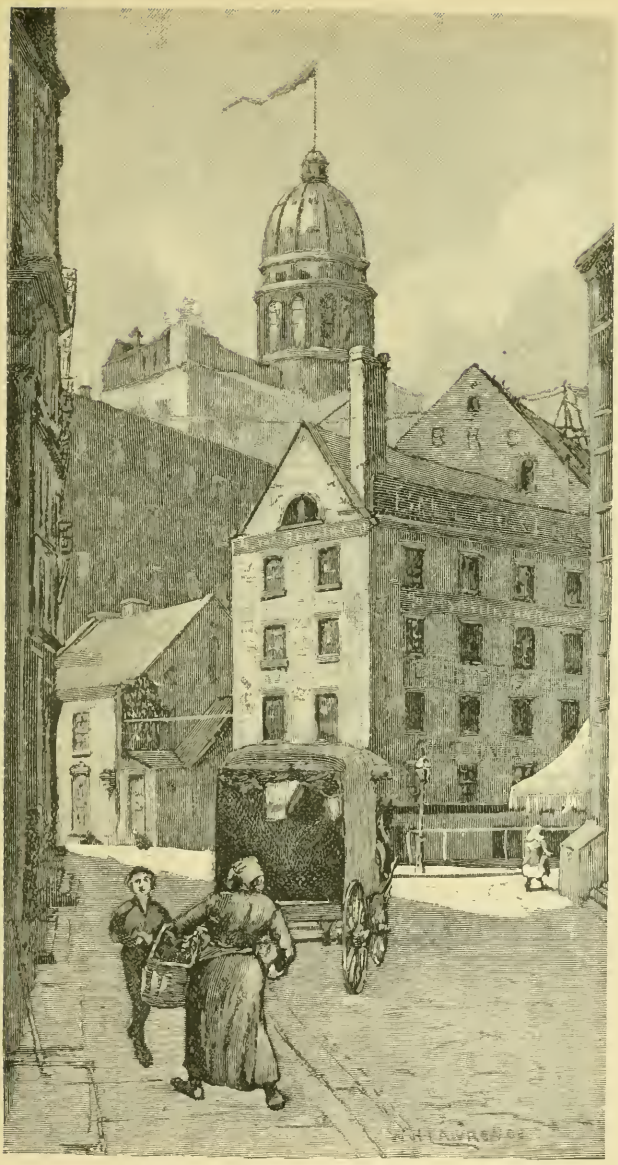
Fifty or sixty years ago, when the only passenger conveyance between Harlem and New York was by Dingledine's stage, which left the corner of One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street and Third Avenue at seven o'clock in the morning and reached Park Row, opposite the City Hall, shortly before ten o'clock, returning at 3 P.M., the stage used to carry up and down half a dozen gentlemen, then young, but afterwards distinguished. Among them were Judge D. P. Ingraham, grandson of Daniel Phoenix, an eminent and wealthy citizen, who was City Treasurer, father of the present Judge Ingraham; Edgar Ketchum, af-

terwards Register in Bankruptcy; Alderman Charles Henry Hall, Daniel Fanshaw, printer to the American Tract Society, and Isaac Adriance. They have passed away, full of honors as of years, leaving precious and fragrant remembrance. The fare on the Dingledine line was twenty-five cents. A few years later the stages found that it paid to make hourly trips. At first they used to leave from No. 21 Bowery, which was a sort of country-hotel, with stables in the rear, but afterwards they resumed their old stand at Park Row. The fare at that time, as I well remember, was a

BULL'S HEAD TAVERN, ON THE SITE OF THE BOWERY THEATRE

shilling, and the ride usually gave the passengers exercise enough for a week.

The first street paved in Harlem was One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Street, and this improvement was effected in 1832. The pavement, with flagged side-

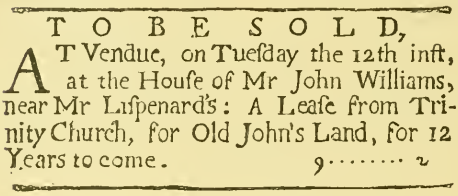


ROSE STREET SUGAR-HOUSE
[As it appeared in 1892, just before it was demolished]

walks, extended from Third to Eighth Avenue. How much of a public improvement this was may be judged from the fact that at the time there were no paved streets in New York north of Clinton Place and St. Mark's Place, except a few in Greenwich Village. It was due to the efforts of Alderman Hall, who also caused both sides of the street to be set out with elms, many of which, and some of gigantic stature, still remain to show how good deeds survive our dust. The city had men for aldermen then. During the fearful cholera season of 1832 it became the duty of Alderman Hall, with several of his colleagues, who with himself constituted the Board of Health, to visit the quarantine on Staten Island. It was a perilous duty, but they did not hesitate. Within a fortnight all but Alderman Hall had died of the epidemic. Two of the alderman's brothers—Jonathan Prescott Hall and David P. Hall—were famous lawyers of the olden time, and the three names deserve a place in the city's pantheon when it shall be built.

The old cotton-wood on the Gracie lawn is the largest tree on the Island of Manhattan, and I had thought it the largest in the city limits, but opposite, a lonely sentinel on the marshy point of Ward's Island, is a venerable cotton-wood that is seventeen feet in girth at a point three feet from the ground. Who planted these giants? It was the Laird of Dumbiedikes who, when he lay dying, said to his son and heir: "Jock, when ye hae naething else to do, ye may be aye sticking in a tree; it will be growing, Jock, when ye're sleeping." And how much of human nature was there in his next words: "My father tauld me sae, forty years sin', but I ne'er fand time to mind

him." Our Harlem alderman found the time, and I have no doubt that as he now looks up into the branches of the tree of life by the side of that other river, he thinks of the little elms he stuck into the ground hard by our river's waves, and is glad that he planted them.


TO BE SOLD,
AT Vendue, on Tuesday the 12th inst, at the House of Mr John Williams, near Mr Lispenard's: A Lease from Trinity Church, for Old John's Land, for 12 Years to come. 9..... 2

AN OLD ADVERTISEMENT

CHAPTER XII

INDIAN RAIDS AND MASSACRES—A ROLL OF HONOR—THE OLD DUTCH CHURCH—ST. ANDREW'S PARISH—DAYS OF PESTILENCE AND DEATH

My comrade and companion, Nebuchadnezzar, the great yellow cat who is the pride of the household, went on the war-path this morning. From the library window I watched his noiseless, stealthy tread; his ambush behind the lilac roots; his patient, moveless gaze, and then his sudden spring upon the prey; his uplifted claws, the torture of his victim, and the final process of scalping, which left the rat without a head. Presently the victor strutted proudly in, with tail uplifted like a banner and a grim smile of satisfaction about the jaws, and then I felt him rubbing his sleek body against my legs with a purring hymn of triumph. It was a genuine picture from nature, and, as it was unfolded, I could readily see whence the red man had drawn his habit of patient endurance and methods of warfare. Had I been a Brahmin, I might have beheld in Nebuchadnezzar the transmigrated soul of Massasoit or Philip of Pokanoket.

I had intended to sit down and write of the streets and people of Harlem village, but my cat has set me thinking of the days when the Indians were a dream of terror to the early settlers under the shadow of Snake Hill and upon Hell Gate Bay, and of the doughty pioneers who returned from work to find

their homes on the "otter tract" a heap of ashes, or were slain, together with wife and children, on the lands now traversed by railways and thickly sown with enormous buildings. If the men of those dark days, every one of whom seemed to have the soul of a king in his rugged breast, could awake, what would be their astonishment to see the city of palaces that has risen from the isolated village cottages of a decade or two ago, and what would stout Nicholas de Meyer say to the luxurious homes that surround Mount Morris Park, in one of which his lineal descendant, Mr. Joseph O. Brown, the sage of Harlem, has his abode? As little dreamed the parents of the first white child born in New Amsterdam, in their thatched cottage hard by the Battery, that its lineal descendant, Judge Charles H. Truax, would live in a home in Harlem fit for a nobleman, when that distant village would be almost the centre of the city, and would honor the family name upon the bench of justice. Time has seen many changes, but few like those which have built up the commercial metropolis of the western world.

It is passing strange that so little is known of the Indians who inhabited the Island of Manhattan and of their relations to the early settlers. Fenimore Cooper has immortalized in romance the Delawares and Iroquois of the interior regions of the colony, but no poet or writer of romance has risen to emblazon the courage of the settlers who had to battle for their homes in these fertile glades; and the historian has passed lightly over the bloody deeds by which the savage took vengeance for his wrongs. In reading the pages of history, one would be led to suppose that the Dutch colonists, after purchasing the

island for a few dollars, with sundry trinkets and bottles of veritable Dutch fire-water thrown in, had been permitted to take quiet possession of the land and push on their settlements without hinderance. The truth was otherwise. The Indians had sold the land, but reserved to themselves the right of hunting at will and pursuing the game everywhere. It was their means of livelihood, and when in time it came to interfere with the farmer's methods of sowing and gathering his crops, there was trouble. Their principal encampment was at Wickquaskeek, or "the birch-bark country," in the forests which stretched down from Inwood to Fort Washington, and from this camp they took their right name. A haughty and proud race, they kept much aloof, and had given no trouble until Director Kieft attempted to levy a tax of corn, furs, and wampum upon them. It was a most impolitic measure, and as Montagne, one of the Harlem colonists, said: "A bridge has been built, over which war will soon stalk through the land." Hostilities followed, and forty Indians were massacred one night in cold blood at Corlear's Hook, some of whom were friendly Mareekawaks, from Brooklyn. Retaliation came next. The farms at Harlem were devastated; Kuyter's bowerie was burned to the ground while the guard of soldiers were asleep in the cellar or underground hut, and the settlers fled for protection to New Amsterdam. A temporary truce was patched up, and then hostilities broke out afresh. Pieter Beeck, who owned the patent at Horn's Hook—where the Gracie house now stands—was surprised while at work on his farm, and, with his three workmen, was cruelly murdered. Still the Indians were refused compensation for their

rights and privileges, and they announced their determination to expel the whites from the northern end of the island. A foray of three days ensued in September, 1655, during which fifty settlers were slain, and over one hundred, mostly women and children, were carried into captivity. Hordes of armed savages swept over the flats. Jochen Zuyter was slain at his bowerie; later his wife fell a victim to the savages. Cornelis Swits and Tobias Teunissen were killed, their homes on the flats and their crops destroyed, their families carried into captivity, and all the neighboring settlements were swept away. The fury of the red men led them also to cross the East River and carry desolation up and down the Long Island shore. It was a scene of wide-spread devastation, such as sickened the hearts of the soldiers sent up from New Amsterdam to bury the dead and protect the living, and it went on growing in blood and blackness until the director and council at New Amsterdam passed an ordinance, in 1656, requiring isolated farmers to remove their families to the village, and to go out only with armed parties to till their lands and gather their crops.

England has her Abbey Battle Roll, on which her proudest peer is prouder yet to find the family name written, and Harlem should keep in similar remembrance the names of the stout-hearted pioneers, who battled to the death for the very existence of the ancient village. The story of their struggle of twenty years for existence, though it ended in failure, is a rare record of heroism, and deserves more than the little glimpse of sunshine which my pen lets in upon it. Upon this roll of honor, in addition to those whom I

THE OLD FEDERAL HALL BEFORE ALTERATION

[See p. 74]

have named, I should enter the names of the De Forests, Van Keulens, Delavalls, Waldrons (headed by stout old Resolved Waldron, the baron), Vermilyes, Tourneurs, Dyckmans, Kortrights, Delamaters, Bussings, and every pioneer who could be raised up from the dim but glorious past of local history. Some day the world around us will wake to the knowledge that there is a vein of heroism which we now tread underfoot, but that will be richly worth unfolding to the light. The men who succeed are the men who make history, but it is the men who do not succeed that furnish most of the romance to life. It was the pioneer whose fertile lands had been devastated by the savage, and whose hearth-stone had been drenched in the blood of women and children and their defenders, that made the future village of Harlem possible, and determined the authorities at New Amsterdam to make it an armed outpost of this city, alike against the wily savage and the unscrupulous Yankee.

The village was laid out on Church Lane, whose grassy paths and air of rural repose, overhanging elms and adjacent gardens, are still kept in the memories of some old inhabitants of the plain as an exquisite picture which can never be forgotten. The road followed an old Indian trail to the Harlem River and the ferry at Morrisania. If one should draw a straight line from the north-eastern corner of One Hundred and Nineteenth Street and Lexington Avenue to the north-east corner of One Hundred and Twenty-third Street and Second Avenue, and thence to the river, it would pass through the centre of the old Harlem Road or Church Lane. Half a block from the point of departure it crossed the Eastern Post-road, into

which at One Hundred and Twenty-first Street and Sylvan Place came the old Kingsbridge Road from the north-west. The meeting of these roads made what was known to the village folks as the Five Corners, where a market was established in 1807, and where again in 1840 a law was passed for the erection of a market-house and for the purposes of a public square. The market was a failure, the city was neglectful, and for years this land, occupying the half block between Sylvan Place and Third Avenue, was taken possession of by a "squatter," who paid no rent to the city.

In Sylvan Place the antiquarian will find the only surviving traces of the old Eastern Post-road, which took up part of the little street and a large slice of the block to the east of it. Old Church Lane and the Kingsbridge Road also touched upon either corner of the little street, but one may see in the trees which stand in its roadway, and reach their lines out into the blocks adjoining, plain traces of the double line of elms, silver poplars, and willows through which the old stage-coach to Boston used to plod its way. Along the Harlem Road, from One Hundred and Twentieth to One Hundred and Twenty-third Street, and reaching back six hundred feet or more to the north-west, lay the lands of the Reformed Dutch Church, and at One Hundred and Twenty-first Street and Third Avenue stood the church which I remember as a boy, and which has since been moved to a rear lot, and now faces upon the street instead of the avenue. This was built in 1829. The original church edifice stood at the other end of Church Lane, at One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street, about midway between Second and Third

KING'S COLLEGE

avenues, where was also the old cemetery. The first structure was of wood; the second, erected in 1685, was of stone, and aspired to the dignity of an arched door, steeple, and weathercock. William Hellaker, of New York, contracted to build it for the sum of 750 guilders in wheat. According to the prevalent Dutch custom of building houses, ships, and public buildings as broad as they were long, in accordance with the average physical proportions of the genuine Knickerbocker, the contract says: "The size of the church across either way is thirty-six Dutch feet." There is no doubt that it appeared a thing of beauty to all village eyes, when the gilded vane or weathercock, with the glittering ball on which it was perched, and for which John Delamater had been credited nine florins, was proudly raised to the top of the steeple, and left there to decide for once and always any dispute as to the way of the wind. Among the subscribers I note the names of Tourneur, Dyckman, Kortright, Bogert, Van Brevoort, and Geresolveert (Resolved) Waldron, for 100 florins each—every man of note in the colony for some substantial sum. The total cost, in addition to work and material furnished by the people, was 2600 guilders.

Everything went well in the new church until the Leisler troubles of 1690, when the Harlem people naturally took sides with the martyred Dutch governor, who had been executed for his fidelity to the rights of the people, and they cut loose from the brethren of New Amsterdam to such an extent that Dominie Selyns wrote to the classis of Old Amsterdam that the Harlem people had run away with the idea that they could live without ministers or sacraments. The breach

was soon healed, however, and the church grew strong and prosperous. Until the organization of St. Mary's Episcopal Congregation at Manhattanville, the Reformed Dutch Church at Harlem was the only church of any denomination within the limits of Harlem, which, as a separate village organization, comprised the upper half of the Island of Manhattan, and held to its boundary-lines (from the foot of Seventy-second Street on the East River to the foot of One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street on the Hudson) with great tenacity in all questions which concerned itself and the city at the other end of the island.

There was a sturdy independence about these ancient Dutch and Huguenot pioneers, which occasionally came to the surface in their church legislation. At one time, in order to pay the salary of Jan la Montagne, voorleser (that is, foresinger, who led the singing and read the Bible in the church) and schoolmaster, the magistrates laid a tax upon the land. But it came to nothing. The people objected to being taxed for religious purposes. They had enough of that in their old homes, and the French and Walloons especially had suffered cruel treatment under this pretence of tithes. The opposition proved effectual, and a return was made to the old method of free-will offerings, and with apparent success.

There was also a good deal of human nature in the little settlement, and sometimes it involved disputes that were difficult to arrange amicably. No sooner had this matter of the foresinger been settled than public excitement was raised to fever heat by the refusal of several leading men to pay the prices assessed by the pound-master. Horses belonging to Cor-

nelis Jansen, the innkeeper, to Resolved Waldron and Adolph Meyer, oxen that were the property of David Demarest and Jean le Roy, and hogs owned by Delavall and Roloefsen, were found without a herder "upon the bouwland" or cropping the herbage "in the garden" belonging to the church, and straightway were driven to the pound. The delinquents complained that a raid had been made upon the Sabbath day, and declined to pay the 74 florins exacted from them by way of fines. It took a whole day's confab at the village tavern, amid clouds of smoke and endless pots of beer, to adjudicate the matter, and at the end the bill of the worthy tapster was fully equal to the amount of fines collected. Here is a copy of the bill paid by the town:

Cornelis Jansen, Credit:

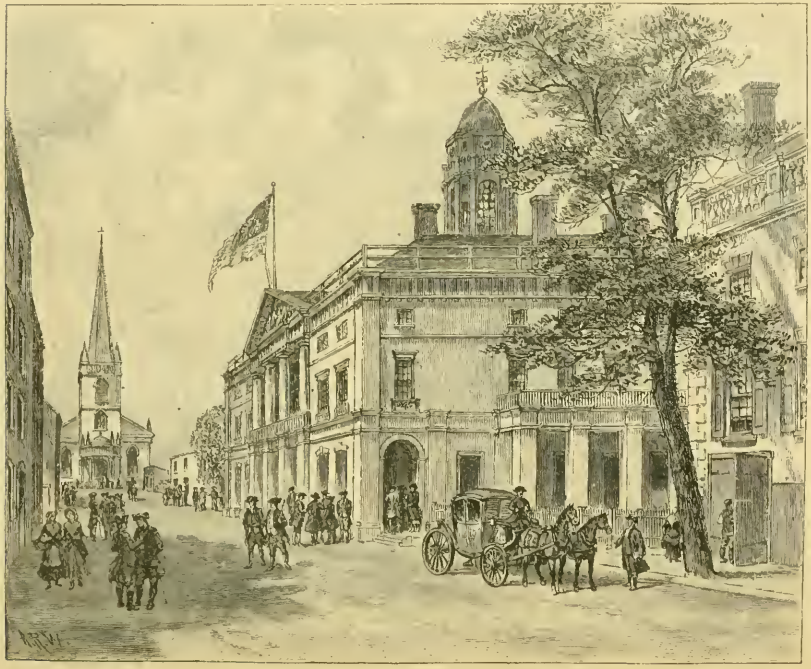
	Fl.	Kr.
Drank at the settlement of the fines, the 25th day of October, 1671, at two bouts	34	0
Also for Mr. Arents, engaged at writing, 2 vans beer	1	12
Further, after the settlement was concluded, also drank 5 vans beer and 1 muts rum	4	10
	40	2

It is not told who got the rum, but the secretary of the conference was found physically equal to four quarts of beer, the vaan being two quarts in measure and the mutsje one gill.

As a boy I have a much more vivid remembrance of the old Episcopal church of Harlem. On Ascension Day, in the forties, Trinity School made its annual excursion to this ancient Dutch burgh, and some of us discovered that the church doors were unlocked, and went in. It was a wooden building, of the then

favorite Grecian style of architecture, with Doric columns in front, and a pepper-box steeple. Standing in the block on Fourth Avenue, between One Hundred and Twenty-seventh and One Hundred and Twenty-eighth streets, it commanded in its earlier days a magnificent view of Harlem and the East River, the still unoccupied meadows by the water-side, the hills beyond, the virgin islands beyond the mouth of the Harlem, and the hills that rose on all sides in the distance, all as yet unmarked, save by scattered villas. In the days when I first visited the church it was a rural edifice, in a rustic village, and its atmosphere was one of delicious repose. I recall the tables of the Ten Commandments, the high pulpit, reached by stairways at either side, the ample desk and little mahogany "altar," so distinctive of the days when ritualism had not as yet been resurrected by the Oxford Tracts. But what most attracted my notice there was a marble tablet on the wall to the memory of the first rector of the church, George L. Hinton. A son of his, a boy of the same name, was my school-mate then, and, no doubt, stood at my side as I reverently read the inscription. The son had been orphaned in a few hours, the father and mother having perished by cholera on the same day in the awful visitation of 1832.

At one of the earliest meetings for the organization of this church, Mr. Charles Henry Hall made a gift of twelve lots on condition that the church bought six adjacent lots, and he was also one of the largest subscribers to the building fund. A wealthy merchant, he had his home on the site of the Metropolitan Hotel, occupying the entire block, with fine stables in the rear. But in 1829 he moved his family and



THE FEDERAL HALL ON WALL STREET

[See also p. 74]

his magnificent stud of horses to Harlem. He was one of the first vestrymen of the church. Among other early members of that body were Lewis Morris and Abel T. Anderson, prominent Knickerbockers; A. B. Sands, William Randel, Aaron Clark, Mayor of New York from 1837 to 1839; Edward Prime, the banker; Robert Ray, John A. Sidell, Archibald Watt, District-attorney Nathaniel B. Blount, Colonel James Monroe, nephew of the President of that name; William G. Wilmerding, Jacob Lorillard, and other men of note living on the East River and on the Harlem as far up as High Bridge, where Colonel Monroe then had his residence. The first church was destroyed by fire in 1871. It was rebuilt on the same site, a handsome Gothic edifice of stone, but recent changes of population have been so great that it was recently decided to move the church site to the corner of Fifth Avenue and One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Street, and to occupy yet another and larger edifice.

The cholera made a terrible sweep in the village of Harlem on its first visitation, in 1832, and in many cases the sick and the dead were alike neglected. It was the Asiatic plague; it slew whole households in a few hours; its very name was a horror. At that time the engine-house of the Harlem fire company, No. 35, located at the south-west corner of Third Avenue and One Hundred and Twentieth Street, a few feet to the west of Church Lane, was used for a temporary morgue. Two negro men had charge of it, and they were compelled to act in the triple capacity of grave-digger, sexton, and minister. Scores of victims, when the plague was at its height, were daily received there, hastily thrust into pine boxes, and buried in the church-

yard just beyond. I have heard an aged physician say that it was rumored afterwards that some were buried alive, but the exigency was too great for delays, and even the ties of kindred were sacrificed to fear of the pestilence. One day a man was found dead under the old willow-tree yet standing in the vacant lot on the south side of One Hundred and Twenty-first Street, opposite the church. A coroner's jury was hastily empanelled, viewed the body, and returned a verdict of death by cholera. In a week, eleven of the jurymen had perished by the epidemic, and the one exception, marvellous to tell, was the foreman, Charles Henry Hall, who subsequently survived all his official associates of the Board of Health on their visit a few days later to the city quarantine.

CHAPTER XIII

WRESTLING WITH HARLEM GENEALOGIES—CHANGES IN OLD DUTCH NAMES — THE VILLAGE PATENTEES AND THEIR DESCENDANTS— GOVERNOR NICOLLS CHANGES THE NAME TO LANCASTER — THE ANCIENT FERRY-MAN AND HIS FEES

THE lapse of time, I find, has wrought as great havoc with the patronymics of Hollanders as my boyish lips ever did with the names of Hebrew worthies and the rivers and hills of Palestine. Indeed, it would be next to impossible to trace some of the older New York families by the names which they now bear. Take the Rutgers for an example. Among the colonists who sailed for New Amsterdam in October, 1636, was Rutger Jacobsen Van Schoenderwerdt. The last name indicates that the future settler came from a pretty Dutch village near where the Van Rensselaers had their country-seat. Twenty-five years later he had become owner of a brewery and a sloop that traded to Albany, and was a magistrate and "the Honorable Rutger Jacobsen" on the records of Church and State. His only son was known as Harman Rutgers, a private in the doughty burgher corps of New Amsterdam, afterwards its captain, a brewer like his father, and who became a purchaser of the brewery of Isaac de Forest, son of one of the earlier pioneers of Harlem, whose dwelling-house and brewery were on the north side of Stone Street, near Whitehall, where the well that supplied water for the

brew is said still to be visible. He was a sturdy scion of the Holland stock and devout withal, for in his family Bible, after announcement of his marriage, he places on record the prayer which many a modern citizen would be shamefaced about writing, though he might hold it in his heart: "May the Lord grant us a long and happy life together. Amen." But then he prayed for his brewery, too: "May the Lord bless the work of our hands!"

Time has played similar tricks with some of the names which the old settlers in Harlem brought with them from the father-land. Claude le Maistre, for instance, an exile in Holland from his home in Artois, France, was the ancestor of the entire Delamater family in this country, one of whose descendants, Schuyler Colfax, born in a house yet standing in North Moore Street, became Vice-president of the United States. Joost Van Oblinus, one of the original patentees, and a magistrate of worth and renown in the annals of the old city and village, would find his name changed to Oblienis and Oblenis, and finally become entirely extinct on the Island of Manhattan, though it is yet found in other parts of the State, and in more than one case has oddly taken, through some strange influence of association, the Irish form of O'Blenis.

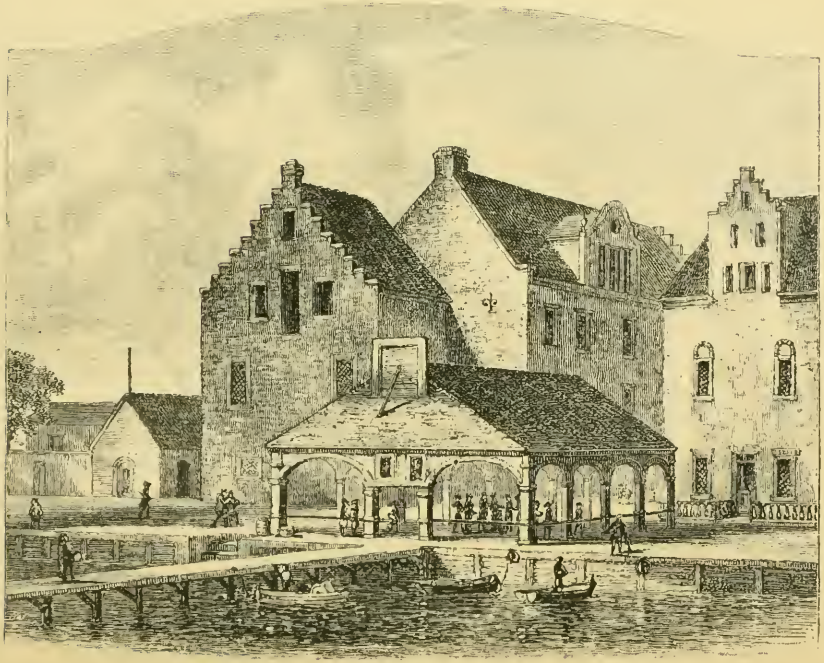
There were, in the early part of the seventeenth century, a large number of French Hugenots who had become refugees for religion's sake, in Holland, among them the original members to whom the Corporation of New Amsterdam issued patents for lands in Harlem. Captain Joannes Benson, whose descendants left their name imprinted on the mill and stream which became noted in village annals, was an exception, and

by birth a Swede. Into his family the McGowns married, and from this source, also, Eugene Benson, the artist, now of Rome, Italy, traces his lineage. Jan Dyckman, ancestor of the family of that name at Kingsbridge, became one of the most prosperous and wealthiest of the colonists, and, like the Brevoorts and Montanyes—the latter claiming their common ancestry in Abram de la Montanye—left many descendants both in the direct and collateral branches, as did the descendants of Daniel Tourneur, a native of Picardy, in France, who have won their spurs alike in mercantile life and in society.

This very week in which I write has seen the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the ministry of the Rev. Thomas E. Vermilye, D.D., the venerable senior pastor of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church, and he, with the bankers who bear that name, and nearly all who bear the name of Vermilye or Vermilyea, trace their common ancestry to Johannes Vermilye, the patentee who came originally from one of the Walloon towns in Artois. One of the most intelligent and the most noted of the Harlem colonists was Resolved Waldron, a printer of old Amsterdam and a burgher of New Amsterdam, whose descendants were many, and who was connected laterally, through his issue, with many of the leading families of the colony. His name has remained unchanged in the male line. But perhaps the most curious change of all to be noticed in this connection is that which gave to the settlement the Kortright ancestry. Cornelis Jansen, a stout trooper in the father-land, who bequeathed to his eldest son, Johannes, "the best horse and the best saddle, and the best

boots and the best pistols, holsters, carbine, and cutlass," did not leave him any patronymic, but Johannes was at first called Cornelissen, and took the name Kortright when he had acquired the farm of Cornelis Kortright by purchase and entered upon its possession. The name thus taken as of right going with the land was faithfully transmitted to his descendants.

A week or two ago I received a letter from a valued friend in Harlem, in which he asked whether I had ever heard that the village was once called Lancaster or New Lancaster? In writing back, I rather ridiculed the suggestion, and yet I lacked discretion, for he was right. When Richard Nicolls became governor of the colony, acting under his Royal Highness and eminent rascality the Duke of York, he had sought to please his master by changing the name of New Amsterdam to New York, and then cast his eyes around for other changes which should obliterate, so far as they went, the memory of the Dutch occupation. The flourishing little settlement of New Haarlem caught his gaze, and forthwith he drew up a patent in which the "freeholders and inhabitants" are notified that "the said town shall no longer be called New Haarlem, but shall be known and called by the name of Lancaster." This was one of the titles borne by his master, the besotted Duke of York, to whose pleasures the fertile Duchy of Lancaster, in England, contributed its revenues. The people of Harlem were at first astounded and then indignant. They determined to ignore the Governor's order and take the consequences. Happily, the change was not insisted upon, and it appears in no deeds of record, and exists only in the above patent, which is ad-



THE EXCHANGE, FOOT OF BROAD STREET

dressed to the "inhabitants of Harlem, *alias* Lancaster, upon the Island of Manhattan," and in the written directions for drafting it, in which Governor Nicolls presented three conditions to be observed, viz.: That the town should be forever thereafter called by the name of Lancaster; that one or more boats should be built, "fit for a ferry," and that the range of the cattle into the hills and forests to the west of the village should be extended. The latter two conditions the village burghers were very glad to grant, but the former they stoutly and steadfastly rejected.

The settlement had been originally christened Nieuw Haarlem, by Governor Petrus Stuyvesant, who exercised royal prerogatives in such matters. There was no one of the pioneers who came from Haarlem on the Sparen, and therefore no jealousies could be excited. Perhaps the last (and best) of the Dutch governors fancied there was a resemblance between the two localities—for the old city was washed by a gentle river and girt about with groves of elms, a great beauty in a land where forests were rare. Quiet as was ancient Haarlem, its history was heroic. For this reason above all others the settlers at New Haarlem were determined not to lose the inspiration of a glorious name, more especially not at the bidding of the Duke of York, whose fidelity to the reformed faith of England was more than suspected. For it must be borne in mind that the village was, in the first place, a city of refuge for those who had suffered from religious persecution—the axe, the sword, the stake, and the dungeon of the Inquisition. Of the thirty-two heads of families who were freeholders in 1661, eleven

were French Protestant refugees; four were Walloons of French birth; four were Danes, three Swedes, three of German extraction, and but eight, or one-fourth of the whole number, were Hollanders. Many of the French subsequently removed to Staten Island and New Rochelle, and the farms were mostly sold to Hollanders, rarely to Englishmen, and the village thus became settled down to Dutch customs and modes of thought, and thus remained to the early part of the present century.

A ferry was as necessary to the comfort of the early Dutch farmers as the church and the tavern. The cattle-fairs at New Amsterdam had brought New England horse-jockeys to that city, and when it was discovered that the cattle from that region were preferable to the domestic breed from Holland, the patentees at Harlem were anxious to trade with them. The ferry was leased for six years to Johannes Verveelen, "previded hee keepe a convenient house and lodging for passengers att Haarlem, and he shell have a small peece of land on Bronckside (Morrisania) and a place to build a house on, which he must cleare and not spoyle the meadow." In consideration of his building these houses, "the governor hath freed him from paying any excise for what wine or beere he shall retayle for one year." One penny in silver was the ferriage for a foot traveller; sevenpence in silver for man and horse, and sixpence for a horse or any other animal. As carriages and wagons were not in use, no charge is specified, but to feed a horse for one day or night "with hay or grasse" cost sixpence. Queerest and quaintest of the charges in the list headed "Ye Ferryman and His Rates" were those for

hotel accommodation. They read: "For lodging any person, 8 pence per night, in case they have a bed with sheets, and without sheets, 2 pence in silver." If one may be privileged to read between these lines, it would appear that "the great unwashed" sometimes travelled up and down the country between Boston and New Amsterdam, always to the horror of the good Dutch housewives, who carried cleanliness to such a pitch of conscience that they went gladly to domestic martyrdom for their faith, as in the case of one portly housewife in Harlem who scrubbed her floor until it broke through with her weight and landed her in the cellar.

The ferry had been in operation but a year when honest Martin Verveelen found his receipts rapidly diminishing, and waking from his slumbers to discern the cause, was informed that the horse-traders from Connecticut were driving their cattle across the ford at Spuyten Duyvil, and thus escaping the dues for ferriage. Complaint was at once made to the magistrates, and an investigation showed that "one John Barcker had passed with a great number of cattle and horses," broke down fences that stood in the way and greatly defrauded the revenues, whereupon he was cast in exemplary damages. But the future needed to be provided against, and by order of the authorities Verveelen removed to Papparmamin, "on the main side" of Spuyten Duyvil, and set up his ferry anew at "the wading place," exacting tribute of all who passed that way except "men going or coming with a packett from our governor of New Yorke, or coming from the governor of Connectecott," who "shall be fferried free." In later years a ferry was opened at Harlem

proper, the ferry-house standing at the foot of Church Lane, where One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Street touches the Harlem River. It was torn down in 1867, and, with one exception, was the last relic of the ancient dorp or village.

It was not until 1673 that a monthly mail was established between New York and Boston by way of Harlem, and then it became a sensation anticipated for weeks to see the mounted postman rein up at the village tavern with his "portmantles" bursting with letters, and packages of portables, tarrying only long enough to bait his horse and refresh his inner man and then dashing away through mud or dust towards distant New England. A century later the Eastern Post-road was opened, and mail-coaches went through once a week, pausing for refreshment at Harlem, and then turning up the road to Kingsbridge to cross over by the bridge. Seventy-five years ago the mail-coaches travelled from New York to Boston twice a week, and only fifty years ago there was not a locomotive running on the Island of Manhattan. The New York and Harlem Railway Company was incorporated in 1831, and two years later had horse-cars running on a single track to Murray Hill. But it was a herculean task to cut through the Yorkville tunnel, and it was not until 1840 that the first steam train on the road was put in operation between Thirty-second Street and One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street. The locomotive first used on this road exploded on the Fourth of July, 1843, and occasioned a great loss of life. The scene of the catastrophe was at Fourth Avenue and Fifteenth Street. The temporary structure at which tickets were sold in Harlem in 1840 was

OLD BRIDGE AND DOCK AT THE WHITEHALL SLIP

a shed that was little larger than an election booth, and much resembled one.

A volume might be written concerning the early settlers of this village that has suddenly become a mighty city — their homely, industrious ways, their uprightness and piety, their thrift, their pride of independence, their love of fireside and home. I have been able to do scant justice to these toilers at the foundations of the city, but their ghosts have been pleasant companions at "My Summer Acre," and have been more real to me than those who pass upon the streets and are of to-day. They will always be to me as the scents of the roses and honeysuckles that withered in the garden and on the porch, imperishable in memory.

CHAPTER XIV

CRITICISED BY A CROW — FAREWELLS TO THE OLD HOUSE BY THE RIVER — CONVINCED THAT ONE ACRE IS ENOUGH — AN OLD-TIME HARLEM LETTER—OUR FAMILY DINNER—THE LAST NIGHT OF "MY SUMMER ACRE."

As I stood upon the back porch this morning to drink in the sunshine just dashed with frost, I heard the last of the woodpeckers hammering at the trunk of the old cherry-tree in search of his breakfast. He did not seem to be at all lonesome, but rather was a cheery little fellow with whom business had driven sentiment out of his head, or else, as I fancied, he might have paused and twittered out a few bird thoughts about the flight of all the rest of his fellows in feathers. But he was as heedless of creatures who cannot fly as were the sea-gulls that were skimming the waters of Hell Gate, and who, as they at times swung slowly up and then darted swiftly down through the sunshine, were a flash of silver in the sky. I stood and drew in once more the full beauty of the scene: the rushing river and unquiet Gate, the islands, headlands, and black bits of rock amid the broken waters, with each one its own story of shipwreck and legend of the goblin days of the colony—the brown marshes, with their stretches of green lawn on the uplands beyond them — the trees that bounded the horizon, all bare and brown when seen close at hand, but now transfigured by the embrace of the sun—and I drew it

all in, every fair feature of this wonderful Venice in America, so as to call it up before my eyes in the days to come when I should talk or think of the old house by the river. "If I were to moralize upon this scene," I began, half aloud, thinking that Nebuchadnezzar and Martha Washington, who sat curled up in quiet content on one of the steps at my feet, were my only auditors. "But you know that you never do anything else, father," broke in mischievous Mistress Nell, who had come quietly forward and stood at my elbow, "and the coffee is getting cold and I am hungry." Just then there came down from the upper sky the strident "Ah! ah!" of a crow who was winging his way to the fishing-grounds of Long Island, and who had paused for a moment to fling down his mockery of the idea that age could moralize or youth be hungered, and Nellie and I turned to each other and smiled at the wise saying of the bird.

There was nothing left for regret in the lawn and gardens upon which we turned our backs. There are bits of emerald in the grass-plot, but for the most part it is sere and brown. The syringa and lilac bushes, moved thereto by plentiful rains and a few days of late, warm sunshine, have sent out stray leaves of green, as if they were dreaming of a second spring, and a few marigolds and dandelions yet linger defiant of frost, but the glory of the flowers has departed. In black Diana's realm a solitary pumpkin, a very apple of her eye, revels in riotous sunbeams, and a few dilapidated and disreputable stalks of corn keep it company. The rest has become only a memory that we can carry away with us. It will serve us hereafter for epics at the fireside. There is not one of us who will

forget the wealth that this memorable acre poured out at our feet. "If I were to moralize," I had remarked only yesterday in strict confidence to my cats, "I would say that you will dream many a time in the coming winter of the delights that have been yours in this delectable land, and whole armies of edible and well-digested songsters will rise from their graves and flit through your slumbers—but I forbear." It sounds magnanimous to close in this way, for, as I have tried to impress upon Mistress Nellie, I never moralize. We leave the gardens to the toads and crickets, for whom the builders, when they come next spring to remove the roof that has sheltered us and to lay the foundation of a modern brick abomination in the shape of flats, will make life a burden.

The coffee was all right, and so were the delicate pancakes, in whose concoction Diana was a phenomenon; but somehow we brought little appetite to our breakfasts. If we were but sojourners for a season in the tents of the Knickerbockers we had come to be fond of our temporary home, and none of us liked to say to the other in words that this was the last morning that we should sit down together and have the trees above our heads and the river at our feet. Even Master Felix had caught the oppression in our hearts, and had commenced with, "I say, papa, at this time to-morrow—" when he checked himself, looked at us with a sudden pang of thought and gave relief to his feelings by stooping to pinch Nebuchadnezzar's tail, drawing from that patient animal such a howl of indignant protest that we all joined in the boy's hysterical laughter. Master Felix turned it off well, and inquired with deep affectation of interest in antiquities, "I say

papa, when will you finish about Harlem?" It was a relief to me to say: "That depends on the future, my son. I have only scratched the surface of the ground that is rich with a harvest of remembrance. It would take a whole volume to do justice to the men who from first to last have made the marshes and wooded heights of Harlem to blossom into a city. Some day you may set yourself to the task, if you like." Master Felix smiled. He likes best to hear of the times when the Indians had their October camp at Hell Gate Bay, and reared the piles of oyster-shells which in after-years testified to their fondness for the delicious bivalve; or of the days when, with blunderbuss and musquetoon, the slow but sagacious Dutch youth pursued the otter and rabbit across the spoor at the Kills and on to Horn's Hook.

But I must pause here to speak of a letter which I have recently unearthed and that is addressed to the "Honorable, Valiant, and Worthy Lords, my Lords Petrus Stuyvesant, Director-general, and the Council of New Netherlands." It is written by a worthy voorleeser and schepen, one of the founders of Harlem, who had sought and obtained the assistance of the council in wooing for his second wife a buxom widow whose husband had been lost at sea. Things had not gone well with him afterwards. The winters had been hard; his pay had been small; harvests had been niggardly, and age had added to his troubles until, at sixty-eight, he had incurred reproof from the council for being in debt upon their books. It was a primitive community, in which unflinching honesty was the rule, and incessant labor every man's lot. The unfortunate pioneer received the rebuke "with great

heart grief," but he adds, "not that my conscience witnesses to me that I am fallen into the same by any *quis cingit ostio* that I may have practised, having (without boasting) always kept my household in victuals and clothes temperately as a common burgher here; but the excessive dearth of all things has driven me insensibly into such need and poverty as that never in the sixty-eight years that I have lived, so great distress have felt, finding myself destitute of all means to provide for my daily bread and provisions for the winter." Yet his courage was undaunted. "My life," he writes, "is in Him who hath always helped me." So the brave old man, whose domain covered my little summer acre, and many another that was then equally unprofitable, girds himself anew for the fight, and comes out victor in the end. These were the heroes and this the rude but heroic work that redeemed the Island of Mahattan to civilization. Doubtless their spirit survives in their descendants, but I sometimes wish that there were more of the ancient courtesy of address extant, such as is shown in this quaint old letter, to which the writer subscribes himself, "Your Worthy Honors' humble and willing servant."

One of the surviving and immortal wonders of the world is the amount of luggage and trash which one small family can accumulate in the course of a season. We brought nothing when we came here, which is the way we put it to ourselves, but it is certain that we shall carry a mountain away. A few books here, a few pictures there, an easy chair or two, some additional comforts, then the furnishings of our temporary home kept accumulating at the expense of our city house,

BROAD STREET AND EXCHANGE PLACE, ABOUT 1680

and now we have been compelled to pack up amid many groanings of heart and at the expense of a day of rare discomfort. It would not be so bad if we were glad to go, but in our hearts we know that we dislike to close this pleasant chapter in the book, and though we say to each other that it will be a relief to be back in our old haunts, we somehow feel an attachment to this ancient mansion that makes the very ghosts of the men and women who dwelt here in past centuries seem like familiar acquaintances. This breaking-up recalls the legend of the enchanted palace in which a mortal couple were allowed to dwell in uninterrupted bliss, but warned that the walls would collapse and their luxurious contents vanish at the first farewell that should be spoken.

The old colonel was our guest at dinner, and Mistress Nellie was charming as she waited tenderly upon him. There is a secret between them, as I long have known, and I trusted to this dinner to reveal it, but even the mince-pie — which my old friend, the Presiding Bishop, says is not orthodox until "Stir Up Sunday," for which see the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent—with its genial cheer, did not bring it to the surface. But we did bravely, none the less. The old colonel was in his best mood and gave us rare reminiscences of his campaigns in Florida against the redoubtable "Billy Bowlegs" and the Seminoles, those fierce but courtly paladins of the Everglades, and at the request of Master Felix, and on condition that he will put it into words, I told the story of the "Two Brothers," from whom the two little islands off Port Morris in the East River are named. But Diana capped the climax, when the boy insisted that she

should tell him the story of the two Hog's Backs and Captain Kidd, with which she had more than once entertained him in the kitchen. "'Deed and 'deed, Mas'r Felix, I don't know nuffin 'bout dem beast-esses!" she cried out from her post behind Mistress Nellie's chair. "Dat fool nigger what's courtin' me done tell me 'bout de debbil flying away wid ole Dutchman and leavin' him straddle de Hog's Back, and he wants me to go down and hear de old ghostesses sizzlin' on de Frying Pan Rock. I'se glad to go back to folkses any way, 'cause if I stay here any longer dat nigger 'll want me to dig down at de foot ob de rock by de garden shore for Cappen Kidd's gold." And so here were love and legend, buried gold and ancient fable, as the cap-sheaf of "My Summer Acre." It was marvellous.

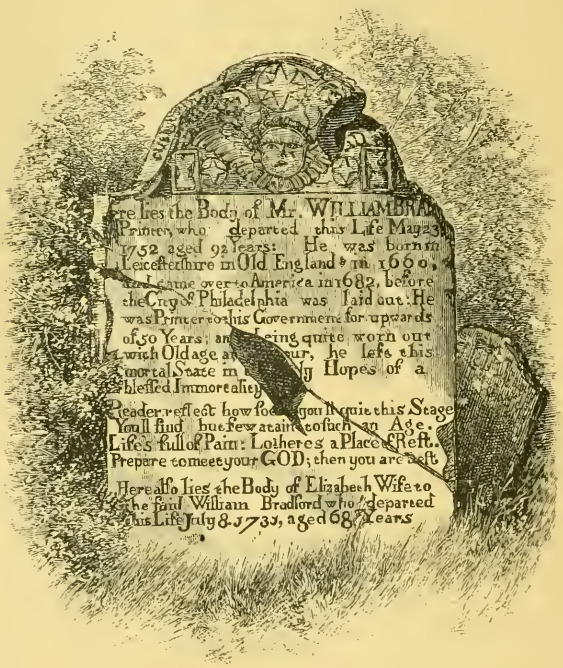
Just then something still more wonderful happened. My daughter left her place at the table—the twilight was coming on then apace, but we would not have the candles lighted yet—and went and stood by the old colonel, placing her little hand in his. "Father," she said, with a playfulness that was painful to me because its touch of solemnity, "you have been teaching me all this summer that one acre is enough for happiness, and I have learned the lesson of contentment with a small lot in life." I did not dare smile at her little joke, but the old colonel chuckled and said under his breath: "A centre shot, by George!" Then Nellie went on, with a tremor in her voice that lent added beauty to its gentle music: "Please don't laugh at my confession of conversion, but make room at your table to-day for the man whom I honor and revere of all the world next to you, and to whom I have given

my heart." I was speechless. Nellie came and knelt at my chair. The door opened. I heard a smothered duet of laughter which convinced me that Diana's lover and that sable spinster were in the plot, and then a young man came and knelt by Nellie's side, whom I knew to be the old colonel's grandson, a college tutor and preacher in Connecticut. Now, I do not like preachers outside of the Established Church, and I am still somewhat of a Dutchman in regard to Yankees, but what was a man of peace to do under such circumstances? If I objected that he was not rich in this world's goods, what became of my pet theory about a single acre and an old-fashioned home? Besides, I should be in a minority of one. When the young man came in at the door behind him stalked Nebuchadnezzar, bristling all over with friendliness, his tail borne high in air as a sacred oriflamme, and doing all that a cat could do to give the young couple his benediction. He had at once adopted Nellie's suitor into the family, and what could I do then but lift Nellie up and kiss her, with a few natural tears, as I placed her hand in that of her future husband and bade God bless them? It was Master Felix who broke the silence with a remark that set us all at our ease: "Nellie, I'll get him to teach me how to shoot rabbits."

The old colonel departed early, but it was nine o'clock before the family took up its line of march and left the Ark. Like our predecessors of Noah's time, we went out in pairs, Diana and her sable escort, both giggling audibly with happiness, in advance. Master Felix and I came next, and in a basket on his arm were Nebuchadnezzar and Martha Washington, growling savagely. At the gate Nellie and Paul lingered for

a moment in the shadow of the tall fir-tree. "Come away," I said to Master Felix, who had no memories of youth to recall other lingerings in unforgotten shadows. The quiet night came down and wrapped us up. I heard only the chirp of a cricket among the leaves of the honeysuckle vine on the porch that still was full of life though bronzed with frost.

I do not wish to be thought irreverent, but in that one of the many mansions which will have my name upon the door-plate, I hope to be as happy as we have been in "My Summer Acre."



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